The New Deal: 1933-1938

First of a Series of Three Articles

A. B. MAGIL

The New Treason

THEODORE DRAPER

'We Hold These Truths . . .'

SAMUEL SILLEN

The Guild Grows Up

ROBERT ANGE

English Writers and Politics

C. DAY LEWIS

Joe Louis and Hitler

RICHARD WRIGHT

Forsythe Looks at Shaw Again

Cartoons by Gropper, Birnbaum, Reinhardt, Snow, Richter

ON THE COVER

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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JULY 5, 1938

FIFTEEN CENTS

New MASSES

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NEXT week's monthly Literary Section will include, among other stories, poems, and articles:

The short stories, "Quiet and Safe," by Len Zinberg; "Food for Americans," by Jo Sinclair.

Sections of a long poem, "Fragments for America," by Norman Rosten, and a poem by Alfred Hayes.

An article by Murray Godwin entitled "The Underground God."

Donald Ogden Stewart, humorist and president of the League of American Writers, will review Robert Forsythe's new book, *Reading from Left to Right,* in an early issue. Forsythe's book is a collection of his articles in NEW MASSES during the past two years.

Over the July 4 weekend, NEW MASSES editors A. B. Magil, Samuel Sillen, Bruce Minton, and Theodore Draper have been asked to speak at various resorts on the meaning of Independence Day.

In the story on the recent election in the International Typographical Union, appearing in the June 21 issue of NEW MASSES, George Sherman inadvertently made two misstatements. In referring to Jim Lynch, former head of the ITU, he wrote, "Judge" Lynch. The confusion is unfortunate. For the record, all of Charles Howard's ticket did not win office. Only three of Howard's slate won office; twelve of Baker's supporters were elected.

A drawing by Jon on page 13 of the June 21 issue was incorrectly attributed to Eastwood.

The Committee of Discharged Woolworth Store Employees has written to us asking help in their fight for reinstatement. According to the letter, girls formerly employed at the 4518 Thirteenth Ave. Woolworth store, Brooklyn, New York, were discharged because they were Jewish. They add, "We demand that we be reinstated and that *all* present employees remain on the job."

The Workers University of Mexico, located in Mexico City, is having so many registrations from the United States for the Summer School for Foreigners this year, that it seems that 1938 will break all records in the number of American students. From a survey of the applications, the Pan-American Highway finds first preference among the student travelers; it is the most inexpensive way of traveling to Mexico and perhaps the most picturesque. The trip by car from New York to Mexico City can be made comfortably in six days, traveling only during the daytime. The university does not supply cars or arrange parties, but simply gives traveling information, and it is up to the student either to go in his or her own car, accepting guests, or to find out *who may have* car accommodation to offer.

The Radio Division of the Federal Theatre Project has dramatized and will produce over the radio this summer five books by Paul de Kruif. The five books are *Microbe Hunters, Hunger Fighters, Men Against Death, Why Keep Them Alive?* and *The Fight for Life,* in that order. The series will be broadcast over the Columbia network on Thursday evenings, beginning June 30, at 8 p.m. (Daylight Saving Time).

Between Ourselves

A program of music of the American Revolution will be broadcast over a coast-to-coast Columbia network (New York outlet, WABC) on July 5 from 3:30 to 4 p.m. The program will be given by the Columbia Male Quartet and two soloists, Charles Hayward, tenor, and Hollace Shaw, soprano, and will be directed by Elie Siegmeister, well known progressive composer. On July 26 over the same network Siegmeister will direct a program of music of the Civil War period.

The Cartoonists Guild, section of the United American Artists, and affiliated with the CIO, is holding an exhibition of anti-war cartoons and satirical drawings. Many NEW MASSES artists are contributing to the exhibition which will open July 15 at the United Artists headquarters, 235 Seventh Ave., New York City. "At no other time in history has the danger of war been such an omnipresent reality," states the announcement sent out by the Cartoonists Guild. "The power of cartoonists and satirists is well known in directing the minds and thoughts of the multitudes towards these dangers."

What's What

FROM Upton Sinclair came a letter accompanying a clipping from *Science and Society,* published in England. Sinclair wrote, "I enclose a very interesting article, thinking that you might like to quote the compliment to NEW MASSES. Do not confuse this magazine with the American one of the same name." The article by Alexander Henderson, which discusses censorship, refers to NEW MASSES as "the best Communist periodical in English."

The drive for five thousand new readers, officially ended on May 1, was something of a milestone in NEW MASSES history. It proved two things: (1) That there are hundreds of thousands of people who want NEW MASSES but don't know it because they have never discovered the magazine, and (2) that the best way to get the news to them and subscriptions from them is through our present readers.

We've been thinking about the challenge of Granville Hicks' book, *I Like America.* The middle class is waking up, he says. But these groups would better understand their own position and what to do about it, if they read NEW MASSES regularly. We've accepted this challenge. We must reach these groups.

The five thousand subscriptions from the WYFIP drive was the beginning. The next step is to be ten thousand new readers by November 1. Plans are under way for an extensive drive to begin within a few weeks. This will be the biggest thing NEW MASSES has attempted in its whole history. We are counting on our readers again to give us the same spirited cooperation that made the previous drive such a splendid success. Watch for the official announcement in an early issue.

Who's Who

ROBERT ANGE was a delegate from New York to the American Newspaper Guild convention in Toronto. . . . Richard Wright, author of *Uncle Tom's Children,* recently joined the editorial board of our Literary Section. . . . John Stuart was co-author, with Bruce Minton, of *Men Who Lead Labor.* . . . David Ramsey is educational director of the International Fur Workers Union. . . . Paul O'Donaha is the pseudonym of an Irish poet and critic.

Flashbacks

WE VENTURE to prophesy that *echt-amerikanisch* Mayor Hague will not call a mass meeting in Journal Square on July 4 in order to remind his subjects that in 1776 on that day it was the opinion of certain agents of democracy that "Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness], it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." . . . This week of libertarian anniversaries also includes a day dedicated to Simon Bolivar, the George Washington of South America, who was born July 2, 1783. . . . And Giuseppi Garibaldi, fighter for Italian freedom, was born July 4, 1807 . . . Jean Jacques Rousseau, philosophical forerunner of the French Revolution, died July 2, 1778.

THIS WEEK

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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THE NEW DEAL: 1933-1938

The First of a Series of Three Articles

A. B. MAGIL

This is the first of three articles giving an appraisal of the New Deal from 1933 to the present day. Some of the material in these articles has been taken from a forthcoming book, *The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy,* which I have written in collaboration with Henry Stevens and which will be issued by International Publishers in the latter part of July.—A. B. M.

THE publication in definitive form of President Roosevelt's most important public utterances,* spanning the period from his first campaign for the governorship of New York in 1928 to the beginning of his second administration as President of the United States, offers an opportunity for appraising the political and social phenomenon that is known as the New Deal. In view of the fact that the New Deal is now approaching the first electoral test of its second administration, such an appraisal may help clarify the issues facing the American people in this contest. For the policies of the New Deal are increasingly becoming the fulcrum of the whole developing democratic mass movement that is preparing to challenge the forces of reaction in the coming congressional elections.

I leave for subtler minds such weighty matters as the number of ghosts that can dance on the periods and commas of President Roosevelt's literary style. Suffice it to say that the style, which for the most part is of a uniform texture, has clarity, suppleness, balance, and warmth; it achieves felicitous phrasing without artifice and dignity without loss of the rhythms of living speech. Nor do I think it profitable to follow the example of some commentators and speculate concerning the personality of Franklin D. Roosevelt, seeking an explanation of New Deal policies largely in terms of his alleged *rentier* class psychology. Such speculations are necessarily woven of gossamer and offer too insubstantial a foundation to support the elaborate generalizations that have been built on them. Rather should the New Deal be regarded as primarily a product of the contending social forces of our time. And President Roosevelt has both made history and been made by it.

Ad Reinhardt

There is a popular conception that the general direction of the New Deal has been fairly consistent from the outset. That impression tends to be fortified by a reading of the President's public papers and addresses, for the social objectives which he set for himself seem to have changed little since the 1932 election campaign and can, to some extent, be traced even farther back. These were most succinctly stated by him at the 211th press conference on June 7, 1935:

> The social objective, I should say, remains just what it was, which is to do what any honest government of any country would do: to try to increase the security and the happiness of a larger number of people in all occupations of life and in all parts of the country; to give them more of the good things of life, to give them a greater distribution not only of wealth in the narrow terms, but of wealth in the wider terms; to give them places to go in the summertime—recreation; to give them assurance that they are not going to starve in their old age; to give honest business a chance to go ahead and make a reasonable profit, and to give everyone a chance to earn a living.

How has the New Deal set about attaining these objectives? To answer this question we must bear in mind that the New Deal has from its inception been a battleground on which the progressive and reactionary forces of the country have contended for mastery. President Roosevelt's aim throughout has been to reconcile these conflicting interests and to achieve some compromise that would constitute a middle course. However, far from being a consistent whole, the New Deal has gone through two distinct phases of development and has attempted two distinct types of compromise. In the first phase, dating from March 1933 to approximately the spring of 1935, big business, directly or indirectly, exercised the preponderant influence on New Deal policy; in the second, from 1935 to the present day, its direction has been increasingly determined by the labor and progressive forces of the country. In neither period has the New Deal been consistently progressive or consistently reactionary; in 1933-35, however, the center of gravity in the New Deal compromise lay, on the whole, despite good intentions, on the side of reaction;

* THE PUBLIC PAPERS AND ADDRESSES OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, *with a Special Introduction and Explanatory Notes by President Roosevelt. Edited by Samuel I. Rosenman. Random House. Five volumes; 3,620 pages. $15.*

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in the present period it has shifted, despite frequent waverings, to the side of progress. This has been perhaps most clearly illustrated in the changed attitude of this second New Deal toward two of the most fundamental questions of our time: monopoly and the relations between capital and labor. But before taking up this point, let us place the New Deal in proper perspective by briefly reviewing the situation just prior to the 1932 elections.

While the economic machine slid steadily down the toboggan of economic crisis, vast social unrest swept the country. Hunger marches of the unemployed, farm strikes and forcible resistance to foreclosure sales, the bonus march with its bloody climax at Anacostia Flats, the turning of growing numbers of intellectuals and students to the left, millions beginning to question the fundamentals of the existing order —all this was part of the American scene in 1931-32. The tycoons of Wall Street had the jitters. Instead of prosperity, "Red Revolution" seemed to be around the corner. The ruling class attempted to crush the unrest by brutal police attacks on demonstrations, by the terror of Harlan County, Ky., by the guns of the Ford service men that murdered five hunger marchers, by the bullets and tear gas of the federal troops sent against the veterans of the World War. But even these Draconic measures failed to bring the desired results, and increasingly the big-business mind turned toward a fascist solution of capitalism's dilemma. In October 1931 a committee of the United States Chamber of Commerce issued a report calling for modification of the anti-trust laws and the setting up of a national economic council. Subsequently this developed into a proposal for "self-rule" by trade associations in order to regulate production, prices, and trade practices. In September 1932 the Chamber of Commerce launched a campaign for the forty-hour week as part of the Hoover "share-the-work" movement. While big business was thus laying the basis for the creation of a super-government by the monopolies, an intensive propaganda campaign was being conducted for the establishment of a "strong government" at Washington, with power centered in the President and the activities of Congress sharply curtailed. In a speech in 1932 shortly before his election as president of the Chamber of Commerce, Henry I. Harriman said:

Reinhardt

> Give the President, so far as it can constitutionally be done, the right, when Congress is not in session, to suspend the operation of existing laws and to provide for emergency measures required by the public welfare.

Alfred E. Smith, later of Liberty League fame, declared that "in time of trouble relief can only be found by resorting, at least in part, to the processes of autocratic government," and urged that the Constitution be "put on the shelf" as it had during the World War. Sen. David Reed of Pennsylvania, a Mellon man who later became a member of the national advisory council of the Liberty League, announced on the floor of the Senate that "if this country ever needed a Mussolini, it needs one now." And Demarest Lloyd, a wealthy businessman who also subsequently became a Liberty League luminary, wrote in his magazine *Affairs:*

> Popular government is a perilous extravagance in time of emergency. . . . Large detachments of "the enemy" are within—demagogues, unscrupulous politicians, gangsters, voters who resist payment of taxes, blocs of voters, Socialists, pacifists, Communists. The enemies within enjoy all personal liberties; the right of free speech and ballot. . . . It is absurd to expect any democratic government to cope with them. We do not nominate the President-elect [Roosevelt] for the role of king or dictator. He is still too much of an unknown quantity. It is apparent that unless confusion is to become chaos, Congress, like a long line of unfit rulers in the past, should abdicate.
>
> It should delegate its powers and functions to a small group, not over a hundred of the most well-informed, intelligent, and patriotic men in the country.

In Germany Hitler had taken power, in Austria democracy was being slowly strangled to death, throughout the capitalist world the democratic forces were on the defensive. It was in this atmosphere and amid general economic prostration as a result of the closing of the banks that Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated. He had been swept into office by what was virtually a popular uprising against the Hoover regime. He had challenged the policies of Hoover and promised a new deal. "There is one final objective of my policy which is more vital and more basic than all else," he had said in his Boston speech on Oct. 31, 1932. "I seek to restore the purchasing power of the American people. The return of that purchasing power, and only that, will put America back to work." True, during the same campaign Roosevelt had pledged to continue the ruthless deflation policies of Hoover by reducing government expenditures 25 percent, but such contradictions were engulfed in the waves of optimism, warmth, and solicitude for the common man that flowed from the Democratic candidate. As for the majority of the monarchs of monopoly, they too looked hopefully toward Roosevelt. Men like Hearst and the du Pont brothers, who were later the most bitter enemies of Roosevelt, supported him in 1932, and such people as Huey Long and Father Coughlin worked actively for his election. On March 4, 1933, practically the whole of capitalist reaction was united around the new President.

And in truth there seemed to be every reason for big business to regard Franklin D. Roosevelt as "safe." As governor of New York he had continued, with suave embellishments, the tradition of comfortable bourgeois liberalism initiated by Al Smith. It was a marginal liberalism, expressing itself in such reforms as the regulation of wages and hours for women in industry and the provision of adequate workmen's-compensation. But since it did not, for the most part, affect labor relations in heavy industry and did not interfere with the operations of Wall Street, it aroused no particular hostility among the economic royalists. The insurgent middle-class reform movements, led by men like the elder La Follette, Norris, and LaGuardia, left Franklin D. Roosevelt standing high and dry on his pinnacle of complacence, practicing *noblesse oblige,* disliking Tammany, preferring Al Smith at the 1924 Democratic convention, but going along with the Morgan lawyer, John W. Davis.

Catapulted into the national political arena as President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt might in normal times have continued to be what he had been before. But under the impact of the greatly accentuated class struggle, liberalism could no longer remain marginal. Old-age pensions are one thing when it is a question of providing a poor-house handout for a few old people in a single state. But when old-age pensions are part of a national program of social advance, challenging the power of corporate greed, they become something else. The marginal liberalism of Al Smith soured into reaction; the marginal liberalism of Franklin D. Roosevelt developed into the struggle for the preservation of democracy. But between the pre-1932 Roosevelt and the Roosevelt of today there intervened a perilous phase, the first phase of the New Deal, when he experimented with a type of "reform" that had, in certain respects, more in common with fascism than with liberalism.

In the period of sharp class struggle Roosevelt thought it possible to legislate class peace and reconcile the contradictory demands of the contending social forces. The forthcoming book, *The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy,* describes the Roosevelt administration at this stage as representing "a broad coalition of heterogeneous interests, ranging from the lords of finance demanding measures to strengthen the monopolies, to lower-middle-class strata clamoring for government action to restrain the monopolies." This coalition included at one pole the Wall Street financier and beneficiary of the Morgan preferred list, Secretary of the Treasury Woodin, and at the other, a fairly advanced progressive, Secretary of the Interior Ickes. It brought together among the original brain-trusters the fascist-minded Gen. Hugh Johnson and the liberal Prof. Rexford Guy Tugwell. The question raised by this conglomeration of opposites was: who would prevail over whom? The relation of forces was such that it was inevitable that big business should have the whip-hand. The upper officialdom of the American Federation of Labor, instead of providing leadership for the progressive forces, uncritically supported the New Deal program and entered into a partnership with the dukes and earls of Wall Street, a partnership in which labor, in return for a few illusory concessions, was accorded the high privilege of acquiescing in the anti-social policies of big business. In this setup the progressive features of the New Deal, such as the liberalization of relief policies, TVA, and the Home Owners Loan Corporation, were overshadowed by and subordinated to the dominant reactionary trend. In fact, under the

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circumstances, these progressive features served to cloak the big-business program and to make it more palatable to the masses. And had the reactionary trend continued, the progressive elements in the New Deal program would ultimately have been destroyed.

The preponderant influence of big business in determining New Deal policies became clear shortly after the inauguration of President Roosevelt. His first act after the adoption of the emergency bank measures was to send a message to Congress asking for the passage of legislation which reduced veterans' benefits and the salaries of government employees by about $1,000,000,000. Though Roosevelt, in the note he has written after the text of his message in Vol. 2 of *The Public Papers and Addresses,* attempts to justify the Economy Act, it requires no great financial or social astuteness to see that it was hardly calculated to do what he had set as his main objective in his Boston speech—restore purchasing power. This was particularly true in view of the fact that this drastic cut followed on the heels of the bank holiday which locked away about $4,000,000,000 and, temporarily at least, deprived millions of workers, farmers, and middle-class people of their savings. Shortly afterwards, however, the President began partially to offset the deflationary effects of the Economy Act through increased expenditures for relief and public works. By the creation of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps he turned his back on the cold-blooded Hoover relief policies and established the principle of federal responsibility for assistance to the unemployed.

The inflationary measures of the New Deal were likewise no help in increasing mass purchasing power. While they provided temporary relief to the debt-ridden farmers and middle classes and gave a short-lived fillip to production, they constituted a sweeping, indirect wage-cut for the workers. And in the not-so-long run they also reacted unfavorably for the farmers and middle classes by raising the prices of the goods which they bought.

The two chief pillars of the New Deal—the President somewhere describes them as the two legs on which recovery was marching forward—were the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act. The principle of crop restriction on which the AAA was based cannot be regarded as other than socially reactionary. Nothing so eloquently attests that capitalism has outlived its usefulness as the fact that at a time when millions were hungry, capitalist governments —ours was by no means the only one—could think of no better solution for the agricultural crisis than the curtailment and even the destruction of crops. The historic justification of capitalism and the measure of its superiority over feudalism was the fact that it enormously developed the productive forces. The historic indictment of capitalism and the measure of its inferiority to Socialism is the fact that today, both in industry and agriculture, it chokes the development of the productive forces. Yet by the criteria of the capitalist market—the criteria of profit or loss—crop reduction can perhaps be justified. And the benefit payments to farmers were most certainly a progressive step. What cannot be justified, however, was the financing of these benefits at the expense of the masses of the consumers through the device of the processing taxes. Moreover, benefits went largely to the wealthy and middle farmers, while thousands of tenants and sharecroppers were driven off the land by the acreage-production programs.

Mischa Richter

"A Mr. Fritz Kuhn on the wire. He wants to know if we have anything that LOOKS like firecrackers."

The NRA, which will be considered more fully in the next article, embodied, except for the collective-bargaining section, the principal proposals which the Chamber of Commerce and other big-business spokesmen had made in 1932. The completeness with which the essentials of New Deal policy conformed to the desires of the economic royalists is summarized as follows in *The Peril of Fascism:*

> Compare the program of big business, as formulated by H. I. Harriman in May 1932, with the first acts of the New Deal during the "coalition" period. Harriman, in May 1932, demanded government economy; Roosevelt, in March 1933, pushed a bill through Congress slashing war veterans' pensions and cutting the salaries of government employees by 15 percent. Harriman demanded the relaxation of the anti-trust laws and the enlargement of the powers of the trade associations; the NRA set aside the anti-trust laws and gave the trade associations vast powers to draft codes of "fair competition." Harriman asked for the establishment of an "economic council" to consider the fundamental problems affecting "all business"; Roosevelt set up the Industrial Advisory Board. Harriman demanded the enlargement of the powers and funds of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; Roosevelt, in the first few months of his administration, increased the capital of the RFC from $3,800,000,000 to $4,450,000,000 and in addition authorized the RFC to issue an unlimited amount of debentures for the purchase of bank stock. Harriman demanded the strengthening of the powers of the President; Roosevelt assumed more powers than any President had exercised in peacetime.

Yet so blinded were many liberals and Socialists by certain progressive features of the New Deal and by the aura of social idealism with which it was invested that they hailed it as a "peaceful revolution" that would usher in the golden age in which the lion of capital would lie down with the lamb of labor, big business would play the good Samaritan to little business, and there would be peace on earth, good will to men. Norman Thomas, who turned against the New Deal at about the same time as did the economic royalists, exclaimed in 1933 that the New Deal held out hope that an orderly advance "toward a truly Socialist society" would be facilitated. The *New Republic* of May 17, 1933, drew an analogy between the NRA and the program of the Russian Bolsheviks in September 1917. The solitary voice of dissent in this chorus of praise was that of the Communists who pointed out the reactionary and fascist elements in the New Deal at this period. Though the Communist criticism may at times have erred in detail and emphasis, fundamentally it was sound. True, the Communist Party, on the basis of experience in the struggle between reaction and progress in this country and internationally, corrected certain sectarian errors it had made and brought its policy more completely in harmony with objective developments. The basic shift, however, on which the whole change in the Communist attitude toward Roosevelt was predicated, took place in the New Deal.

The tories thought the New Deal was their own. But it was something more than a political program; it had become a great social symbol. In the long Hoover night that symbol had taken fire in the hearts of the millions who had stood in breadlines, lived in Hoovervilles, starved on the farms. And that glowing promise could not so easily be extinguished.

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Between the Chamber of Commerce conception of the New Deal and the conception of the rank and file of the plain people of the country lay a vast gulf. Roosevelt attempted the impossible task of bridging that gulf. He did not realize that the idea he had helped plant in the minds of the people would become a power that would sweep aside his efforts to mix fire and water and would radically change the political face of the country. Before him lay the choice of placing himself at the head of this popular upsurge or turning his back on it, in which case he would sooner or later be thrust aside. He at first sought to evade a choice, but the stress of events finally compelled him to choose. Three factors were chiefly responsible for transforming the New Deal from a vehicle of the Wall Street drive toward fascism into a progressive force.

1. The political awakening of the American people, particularly the awakening of labor and the growth of its organizational strength and independent activity in both the economic and political fields.

2. The desertion of the New Deal by the forces of big-business reaction because it failed to create class peace via the subjugation of labor, as they had hoped, but, on the contrary, roused the workers to increased activity in behalf of their own class interests.

3. The growth of the offensive of fascism on a world scale, with its threat to peace, together with the beginnings of united democratic resistance to fascism signalized by the struggles in France and Austria in February 1934.

And in all fairness, one should mention a fourth factor. Big business had wanted a fascist dictator in 1932, but fortunately for the country, President Roosevelt was a man who sincerely believed in democracy. He made serious mistakes that jeopardized democracy, but the rise of the popular movement that sought to realize the professed objectives of the New Deal and the pressure of international events quickened all his democratic instincts and enabled him to sense the tides that were moving millions throughout the world. It was these influences that in 1935 began the transformation of the New Deal and raised Franklin D. Roosevelt from an adroit politician, a manipulator of charm and compromise, to the stature of a major statesman and champion of democracy.

★

THE CHURCH HELPS

IN GENERAL the attitude of the hierarchy in Mexico has been a refreshingly, even an amazingly, changed one. There seems to be no anxiety on their part to align the official Church with just anyone, regardless of character, simply because he is opposed to Cárdenas. And there is evidence of a definite willingness to go along with the government in certain social reforms (while still quite properly opposing others) as is evidenced by the present drive among Catholics, initiated by the hierarchy, to raise funds to help pay for the expropriated oil properties.—HARRY SYLVESTER, *in the "Commonweal," June 24.*

"WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS"

The Declaration—162 Years After

SAMUEL SILLEN

HISTORY has confirmed the prophecy of John Adams that Independence Day would be "celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival." For over a century and a half, Americans have given expression to Adams' dream that the revolutionary event would be "solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore." Indeed, we have grown so used to the bells and the bonfires that we forget how bold was the prophecy, how daring the dream. We forget that the names of those patriots who signed the Declaration of Independence were withheld for more than six months, since exposure would mean the gallows if the cause were unsuccessful. We forget that the revolutionary proceedings of the second Continental Congress were not entered even on the secret journals; that as the very moment of crisis approached, Washington found it necessary to attack those moderates who were "still feeding themselves upon the dainty food of reconciliation."

We shall listen to many speeches. Even Hague may pay lip service to the Declaration of Independence. But the hypocrisy of the politicians will testify rather to the vitality of the document than to their own comprehension of its contents. On this anniversary we may well remember the words of Emerson on Daniel Webster's support of the Fugitive Slave Law: "In Massachusetts, in 1776, he would, beyond all question, have been a refugee. He praises Adams and Jefferson, but it is a past Adams and Jefferson that his mind can entertain. A present Adams and Jefferson he would denounce." It is more important than ever before to distinguish phrases from deeds. The same stern tests which Jefferson and Samuel Adams applied to their contemporaries, which Lincoln and Emerson applied to theirs, we must revive for our own time. We violate the spirit of the event to pop off firecrackers in a mood of holiday complacence. The courage, wisdom, and purpose of the American revolutionists deserve the homage of understanding and emulation.

On June 7, 1776, three resolutions were submitted to the Continental Congress by Richard Henry Lee on behalf of the Virginia delegation. The revolutionary core of the Declaration of Independence was contained in the first of these resolutions, which stated the essential proposition that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states," and their connection with Great Britain dissolved. Four days later, the Congress appointed a committee of five—Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston—to prepare a finished draft incorporating the spirit of the resolution. Jefferson, one of the three youngest men in the Congress, respected for his philosophical training and literary skill, was asked by the committee to write the Declaration. It was accepted, with modifications, by the Continental Congress on July 4.

Technically, the independence of the American colonies should be dated July 2, when the Virginia resolution was voted upon by the delegates; but it is significant that the Fourth is the date of our national celebration. For we commemorate more than the formal act of independence. We rejoice in a declaration of principles which eloquently states the permanent faith of a free people. The revolutionary words of the July 4 Declaration are a monument to the revolutionary deed of July 2.

More than forty years after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, John Adams, in an effort to minimize Jefferson's originality, wrote to Pickering: "There is not an idea in it but what had been hackneyed in Congress for two years before." Jefferson's reply, in 1825, is illuminating. The purpose of the Declaration, wrote Jefferson, was "Not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent. . . . Neither aiming at originality of principles or sentiments, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind. . . ." Historians have too often dispersed valuable energy in tracking down every last parallel between the principles of the Declaration and the writings of Locke and the French rationalists. To be sure, Jefferson was deeply influenced by the ideas of the English Revolution in the seventeenth century as well as by the French ideologues of the eighteenth. But the point is that basically the Declaration was an expression of American experience. Tom Paine's *Common Sense,* published half a year earlier, had within a few months of

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publication been read by or to almost every American, according to sober historians of the period. This remarkable pamphlet had embodied the democratic creed of the Declaration. Behind the Declaration was the experience of Concord and Lexington and Ticonderoga. It is permeated with the spirit of the Committees of Correspondence. The endurance and contemporary significance of the document may be attributed to the fact that it was, on the whole, a brilliant reflection of the American mind. Whatever confusion there may be about the exact statistics of support, it is clear that the Declaration, like the Revolution, would have been a fantastic venture without popular agreement on fundamental principles.

The terms of the Declaration are indeed so "firm and plain" that there is little ambiguity as to the nature of these principles. Unlike most Fourth of July orations, it is not a document of evasion. It sets forth a bill of particulars against the Crown as well as a set of general truths considered applicable to all mankind. It is a brief and simple document, but it is as momentous for its time as the *Communist Manifesto* for a later era. With its glowing affirmations of democracy and liberty, it points the meaning of the conflict in our time between tyranny and freedom. Its philosophy of society rests on three broad truths which, properly interpreted in the context of an industrial society, provide the tests of reasonable government: the equal right of all human beings to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (not "property," as in Locke's political treatises); the derivation of just power from the consent of the governed; and the principle that "whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." The Declaration then goes on to affirm not only the right but the *duty* of men to throw off despotic government and to provide safeguards for future security.

Contrary to popular impression, there has never been a moment in our history when all men were agreed in extolling the Declaration of Independence. In the struggle between Crown and Colonies, the Tories of New York and Pennsylvania almost succeeded in defeating the ends of the Declaration. John Adams felt that "more than one-third of influential characters were against us." In the period preceding the Civil War, the conflict between the Abolitionists and the apologists for the slave system was enlivened by endless debates over the merits of the Declaration. Whereas Wendell Phillips consistently based his plea for Negro emancipation on the principle that all men are endowed by their Creator with the inalienable right of liberty, the literary spokesmen for the plantation system, like Simms and Hammond, denounced the "glittering generalities" of the Declaration, and Southern statesmen like Calhoun rejected the "monstrous doctrine of equality." It was only after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation that Phillips could say: "My only joy today is that I can look into the face of the world and read the first line of the Declaration of Independence without a blush. . . ."

A real test of devotion to democracy and liberty today is the degree to which a man will put into practice the principles of the Declaration. Last December, at a meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers, George B. Cutton, president of Colgate University, attacked the Declaration because it "brought together in the same sentence two concepts which are entirely antagonistic, equality and liberty." Even God, Dr. Cutton somewhat irreverently remarked, "is a reactionary. I know he hasn't an open mind, not at least toward some of the half-baked theories of the present time. He does things just about as he did ten thousand years ago." According to a newspaper report, "the manufacturers cheered gleefully" this "blatant attack on the Declaration of Independence." The attitude of reaction is stated just as bluntly by Dr. Alexis Carrel, who developed the thesis in *Man the Unknown* that "The democratic principle has contributed to the collapse of civilization in opposing the development of an elite. . . . The myth of equality [is] guilty of the collapse of individuality." It is perhaps even better expressed by the Nazi ideologue, Werner Sombart: "Those who have served their nation most have been the most unpopular rulers. . . . The statesman serves no popular interest, but only the national idea. All plans for influencing, controlling, or limiting a ruler's will are expressions of an anti-national-mindedness."

Aaron Sopher

Can the contradiction between fascism and the democratic ideal of the Declaration be expressed more decisively?

It is worth noting that the Declaration is also attacked by some liberals and Socialists who have been infected with a species of historical cynicism frequently parading as Marxism. Starting out with the obvious truth that the revolt of the Colonies against the Empire was not a proletarian revolution, they end by minimizing its progressive character. A striking example of this mechanical approach is the book by the Socialist James Oneal, *The Workers in America,* which appeared in 1921. Oneal discovered that the Revolution "was a revolt of the aristocracy fought by the workers under the delusion that the grandiloquent phrases of the Declaration of Independence implied greater opportunities and liberties for the long-suffering laborers." The Declaration, according to Oneal, "does not mention a single distinct working-class grievance." I cannot help adding that Oneal has recently (in the *New Leader,* which he edits) taken a logical step in his evolution as an historian by defending General Conway and Aaron Burr against the "falsehoods" of Earl Browder.

It seems incredible that any serious reader of Marx should adopt such a false historical perspective. The development and consolidation of the workers as an organized class is linked with the success of the bourgeois revolution. In overthrowing the feudal aristocracy, the French bourgeoisie performed an historically necessary and socially progressive task. In overthrowing the restrictive colonialism of the British landowners, the American middle class opened up the vast possibilities of this continent for the growth of an industrial society, which in turn paved the way for the growth of a class-conscious proletariat. The American Revolution was not a revolt *of* the aristocracy, but a revolt *against* the aristocracy. It was, besides, a revolt against the agents and influence of British aristocracy in the Colonies. As Parrington has put it, an important consequence of the Revolution "was the striking down of this mounting aristocratic spirit that was making rapid headway with the increase of wealth. . . . A middle-class America was to rise on the ruins of the colonial aristocracy." In fighting with the middle class, the mechanics and farmers followed a course which in the main served not only their own interests but the interests of social progress as well. In time, to be sure, the planters of the South did arrogate to themselves the role of a feudal oligarchy, and the Civil War, the second phase of the Revolution, completed the release of industrial forces. This bourgeois revolution, too, was supported by workers who, with Karl Marx, recognized its progressive character.

The specific complaints against George III contained in the Declaration were grievances which distinctly affected the welfare of the overwhelming majority. The Declaration charged, in part: that the King refused to acknowledge just laws, that he was dicta-

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torial, that he dissolved representative bodies "for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people," that he discouraged immigration and obstructed laws for naturalization of foreigners, that he imposed standing armies and raised the military to a superior position over the civil power, and that he deprived Americans of the benefits of trial by jury. True, the planters and merchants represented at the Continental Congress were aware of their own interests; true, the workers, necessarily unorganized in an agrarian society, were only indirectly represented at the Congress—but does all this prove that the masses were deluded?

Lenin knew better. In *A Letter to American Workers,* he declared:

> The history of modern civilized America opens with one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few. . . . It was a war of the American people against English robbers who subjected America and held it in colonial slavery as these "civilized" bloodsuckers [modern imperialist states] are even now subjecting and holding in colonial slavery hundreds of millions of people in India, Egypt, and in all corners of the world.

There is an instructive parallel to Lenin's observation in the Declaration of Independence itself, a parallel which should strike home to Americans as they contemplate the fate of Ethiopia and China and Spain. George III, the Declaration complains, "is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation." The right of a free people to determine its own destiny, the right of oppressed colonies to emancipate themselves from imperialist dictation—these immortal truths of the Declaration may properly guide us today. The embargo on democratic Spain is so flagrant a violation of our most cherished national document that it is almost an embarrassment to remind one's fellow-Americans of their unconscious complicity in the "cruelty and perfidy" of fascist bombers.

Parenthetically, it may be observed that isolationists like Professor Beard separate historical experience from the urgencies of political action in their own time. We are indebted to Beard for the reflection that the leading members of the Continental Congress, "men like Franklin, John Adams, and Jefferson, were also thoroughly familiar with interests, prejudices, and jealousies of Europe which might be bent to good account for the revolutionary cause. . . . No acute divination was required to discern that the Congress could use these ancient grudges to serve its pressing needs." Had the Colonies been walled off from France, Spain, and Holland, it is doubtful whether they could have succeeded. Granted that the motives of these nations were not "pure," granted that their own selfish interests could best be served by supporting the move for independence. The fact remains that the conflict of purposes between Great Britain and her Continental rivals afforded the opportunity to advance a great and enduring cause. Even those skeptics who minimize the effect of the European idealists who fought in the front ranks of our armies, even they must acknowledge that without cooperative international action, progress in the Western hemisphere would have been blocked for years. Can we, in an infinitely more complex world, afford to stop our ears and seal our eyes? It again requires no "acute divination" to discern that we can use the conflict of interests between the democratic and fascist countries to safeguard the peace of the world. The Declaration of Independence made a fervent appeal "to a candid world," just as the people of Spain and China appeal to us today. Our historic experience and our immediate interests as a free and peace-seeking people dictate the answer to that appeal.

Indeed, one of the most striking phases of our Declaration of Independence has been its profound international influence. A creative symbol of the spirit of national independence, it inspired liberation movements throughout the world. It was used by the framers of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen adopted by the French National Assembly in 1789. It was a guide for Garibaldi in Italy and Daniel O'Connell in Ireland. The nineteenth-century emancipation movements in South America were indebted to it. Of the Czechoslovakian Declaration of Independence, adopted in October 1918, Thomas Masaryk has written: "it was cast in a form calculated to remind the Americans of their own Declaration of Independence." The world influence of the American Revolution can be compared in our own time only with the influence of the October Revolution. Between 1776 and 1917 runs a broadening stream of thought which carries the rich lesson of man's quest for freedom and a better life.

On this anniversary of the Declaration we may appropriately remind ourselves of its democratic axiom that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. In a world bedeviled by fascism, no truth could be more timely. In America, a systematic effort has been made to frustrate the will of the people as expressed in the last elections. The opponents of the New Deal, the Southern filibusterers against the anti-lynching bill, the industrial monopolists, and a purchased press have deliberately obstructed popular legislation. The will of the majority remains jeopardized by a Supreme Court which has usurped the power to legislate on the constitutionality of laws which have been democratically passed by the representatives of the people. We have a long way to go before we carry out to the full the democratic principles of the Declaration. The oppression of minority groups, particularly the Negro people, is a shocking contradiction of our national ideal. In Jersey City the Civil Liberties Union could not hold a public meeting for the purpose of a memorial reading of the Declaration of Independence. Political minorities are restricted and penalized. The right to vote is extended to a mere fraction of the population in many areas.

The fullest realization of human liberty and popular government under the conditions of modern society is possible only under Socialism. When the majority of the American people are ready for Socialism, we may remember that the Declaration urges upon us not only the right but the duty to alter the form of government to suit the needs and aspirations of the governed. In the meantime, in the immediate present, we are confronted with the challenge of reaction and fascism, which seek to negate our democratic achievement. Freedom and democracy, our libertarian ideals and institutions, are attacked by the fascists as "outmoded" concepts. It is our responsibility, on this anniversary, to answer that challenge by forming a solid wall to protect the gains of more than a century of struggle. The program of the democratic front, as Earl Browder has said, is not a Socialist program: "It is the minimum of those measures necessary, under capitalism, to preserve and extend democracy, all those things which have been the heart of the American tradition in the past, ever since the revolutionary foundation of the United States. The program of the democratic front is squarely based upon traditional Americanism." Abraham Lincoln once said, "I have never had a feeling politically which did not spring from the sentiments in the Declaration of Independence." Genuine allegiance to those sentiments is today a touchstone of genuine allegiance to the democratic front.

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CONTEMPORARIES

We are thus: symbolic of our age—
Unfixed: loose: transitional—
Who have walked through night-encrusted streets
With the drag of loneliness upon our heels,
And had no place to turn;

Who have felt life's beat demanding
Action clear and consummate:
But that denied by forced idle days
That hold the aching body in—ever strained
By mind's inversed revolt.

Millions of us waiting, long—
Unsounded. Like puppets, yanked
Anew by signaled "no applications here. . . ."
Marked with no demand, our hands and feet
Remain supply unused.

Yet, new knowledge found directs us on
Past menacing, unleashed despair:
Skies rain hope and treading feet come firm,
Jar earth's bed, crush these structures built
To hold us without place.

R. F. CHRISTOFFERS.

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William

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Roosevelt's Touchstone

IN HIS "fireside chat" President Roosevelt called on the American people to draw the line that the social and political struggle in the United States has itself been drawing with increasing clarity—the line between progress and reaction. Refusing to abide by the tory dictum that the President is the only person in the country who must not express his preference in primary contests, he frankly posed the real issue in the congressional elections. That issue—and we feel certain the President's views will be echoed by the majority of the voters—is not a candidate's personality or the fact that he has differed with Roosevelt on any specific proposal. The question which the President urges the voters to ask is: where does the candidate stand in regard to the great social and political problems confronting the American people? Does he desire to go forward on the path of liberalism and progress or does he want to deliver up the country to a new reign of Hooverism and reaction?

And while the President affirmed his own right, as head of the Democratic Party, to take a stand in Democratic primaries wherever the issue is clearcut, he indicated that the principle he laid down ought to serve as a touchstone for the voters in the primaries of all political parties. In other words, he believes that the times call for a general political realignment with progressives on one side and reactionaries on the other, irrespective of party label. One might go a step further and point to the need for a democratic front in these elections to defeat those who would undermine the economic achievements and political liberties of the people.

Particularly gratifying was the fact that the President used this occasion to direct an unmistakable kick in the pants at one of the most notorious reactionaries in his own party, Mayor Hague. His warning that "the American people will not be deceived by anyone who attempts to suppress individual liberty under the pretense of patriotism" should be followed by vigorous federal action to bring this tinpot Hitler to time.

Roosevelt was entirely right in asserting that a belief in progressive and democratic principles does not constitute Communism. He was wrong, however, in lumping Communism with fascism and declaring that the former "is just as dangerous to us as fascism itself." Certainly the President has found the firmest supporters of his progressive policies among the Communists. Where they have criticized him, it has not been because his policies were too democratic, but, on the contrary, because they have at times fallen short of the ideal of true progress and democracy. And in contradistinction to fascism, it is the ultimate aim of the Communist movement to create through the democratic choice of the American people the broadest type of democracy, Socialism.

The Communists applaud Roosevelt's statement that the genuine liberals of all parties are opposed to "the kind of moratorium on reform which, in effect, means reaction itself." While the Seventy-fifth Congress, despite "a concerted campaign of defeatism" on the part of the modern Copperheads, achieved much for the people, it "has left many things undone." The summer primaries and the November elections will decide whether these things are going to be done or whether the reactionary bi-partisan coalition will be able to wreck the program of social advance on which the future of democracy depends. The President has given the lead; it is up to the people to make certain that the cause of democracy wins.

Coalition in Minnesota

THE Farmer-Labor primary in Minnesota, in which Gov. Elmer A. Benson defeated Hjalmar Petersen by about fifteen thousand votes, was something more than a contest within the ruling party of the state. Actually it was a dress rehearsal for the elections, with the progressive governor being forced to overcome the united opposition of Republicans, tory Democrats, and right-wing Farmer-Laborites. The New York *Times* reports that "many Republicans and Democrats went into the Farmer-Labor primary to defeat Benson, whom the conservatives of this state dislike with an amazing intensity." J. P. Morgan's New York *Sun* likewise admits editorially that "the distribution of the votes in the Minnesota primary election indicates that many Republican and Democratic voters in the state entered eagerly into the family quarrel in the Farmer-Labor Party." And Republican newspapers in Minnesota concede that fully 75 percent of Petersen's vote came from "beat Benson" invaders.

This makes Governor Benson's showing all the more remarkable. His total vote of over 200,000 is more than double the vote he polled in the 1936 primaries and is the highest ever received by a Farmer-Labor primary candidate in the twenty years of the party's history. What this indicates is that the overwhelming majority of Farmer-Laborites, far from being embroiled in any family quarrel, stand firmly behind the governor's progressive, pro-New Deal policies.

Encouraging, too, is the fact that all five Farmer-Labor congressmen, who are Benson supporters, were renominated, with Congressman John T. Bernard leading his nearest rival by a two-to-one margin.

In the finals, Governor Benson will face a formidable Republican opponent, Harold E. Stassen, whose stock in trade is goldbrick progressivism. A united democratic front of Farmer-Laborites and liberals, Democrats, and Republicans can assure the defeat of this candidate of the banking and industrial interests of Minnesota.

Revolt Against Chamberlain

THE crisis in the British government is beginning to resemble that of last March. Five days after Hitler entered Vienna, on March 16, between fifty-five and sixty Conservative MPs signified their willingness to cross over to the Opposition side of the house; one anti-fascist Conservative, Harold Nicolson, actually conducted negotiations with leaders of the Labor Party. The government pulled through the March crisis only because the Labor Party leaders were unwilling to rally all those discontented with Chamberlain policy into a united peace front. But as long as Chamberlain persisted in consenting to, and even cooperating with, fascist aggressions, it was inevitable that his government would soon find itself in trouble.

In certain respects, the revolt against the Chamberlain betrayal has now gone beyond that of March. Ten former government supporters ostentatiously abstained from voting confidence in the government. Among the ten was Winston Churchill, whose politics are always erratic, but who now seems to have made up his mind that Chamberlain is due for a fall anyway. One by one, the government is losing the support of valuable popular figures. The latest to make a clean break with Chamberlain is Viscount Cecil, the leading supporter in Britain of the League of Nations. Eden, Churchill, Cecil—Chamberlain cannot afford to have many more such repudiations.

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The bombardment of two more British ships and the death of three more British sailors came at a bad moment for Chamberlain. The attacks followed, by only a few hours, solemn assurances from Burgos that no more ships flying the British flag would be molested. If the Labor Party leadership rises to this developing situation Chamberlain will surely go and a new face will be given to European politics.

A Vital Investigation

THE investigation of monopoly authorized by Congress is the most important of its kind since the famous Pujo investigation of the "money trust" in 1912. Let us hope that the present inquiry will be more productive of tangible results than was its predecessor. The investigation was requested by President Roosevelt in a special message to Congress on April 29, a message remarkable for its incisive critique of the abuses of monopoly and its realistic grasp of the complex problems involved. The investigation, for which $500,000 has been authorized, will be conducted by a committee of twelve, consisting of three representatives of the Senate, three of the House, and one representative each of the Departments of Justice, Labor, Treasury, and Commerce, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission.

As NEW MASSES pointed out in an editorial in its May 10 issue, the problems of monopoly are the problems of the decaying imperialist phase of capitalism and can be *fundamentally* solved only through the establishment of Socialism. But this is not the same as saying that nothing can be done under capitalism. On the contrary, the effort to maintain and improve living standards and preserve democracy necessarily involves a struggle to curb the overweening power of that "private collectivism," as President Roosevelt has termed it, represented by finance-capitalist monopoly. The economic crisis makes an investigation of and positive action against the monopolies all the more essential since it is the monopolies that have aggravated the crisis by deliberate sabotage designed to blackjack the Roosevelt administration into yielding to their demands.

Fortunately the administration shows every desire of avoiding the blind alley of utopian "trust-busting" in the investigation. It is not bigness or mass production that is the evil; it is the concentration of financial control in the hands of a few powerful Wall Street banks and corporations. Such concentration is inevitable under highly developed capitalism, but not all of its abuses are. The key to any action against the monopolies lies in subjecting to some measure of public control the price-fixing through which the trusts gouge the entire population. The prices of farm products and raw materials, for example, have declined sharply. As Assistant Attorney General Thurman W. Arnold pointed out in a recent speech in New York before the Trade and Commerce Bar Association: "The great mass of our population sell their goods and services and labor in the competitive markets. They buy their necessities in a controlled market." And he aptly characterized high monopoly prices as a form of taxation, "levied without public responsibility or public control," with the proceeds "used for private and not for public purposes."

The curbing of the monopolistic price racketeers is an inescapable duty of any government dedicated to the maintenance and extension of democracy.

Rail Wages Attacked

FOR many years the rank and file of the Railroad Brotherhoods was inactive, and its leadership bogged down in apathetic defeatism. During the early years of the crisis when wages of railroad workers were reduced, the Brotherhood officials "cooperated" with the companies and offered no resistance. This spring, new cuts of wages, only partially restored since 1933, were again proposed. Many who remembered former capitulations accepted them as inevitable. But in the last month both the Brotherhood officials and the rank and file have declared that they will not tolerate any paring of wage rates. If the National Railway Board and its meditation and arbitration committees will not preserve wage standards, then the Brotherhoods will strike. Throughout the country, meetings are planned to implement this refusal to hold the bag for the companies. The gathering at Manhattan Opera House in New York City on June 26 was the first of its kind in over a decade and expressed the growing resolve of workers not to bear the burden of the companies' greed, mismanagement, and financial sleight-of-hand.

An attack on railroad wages invariably preludes further assaults on the living standards of workers in all other industries. Resistance by the Brotherhoods has already served to rally both the CIO and AF of L to their support, thus increasing the unity of the entire labor movement. Moreover, as William Z. Foster pointed out at the Communist Party convention, the struggle to maintain present rail wages, incidentally even now lower than those in other basic industries, cannot be separated from the struggle to elect progressive candidates in the coming elections or from the need to build the democratic front. Because elaborate legislation surrounds railroad labor, wages immediately become a political question. The Brotherhoods, in the efforts to defeat the companies, can gain invaluable support from progressive members of Congress: it is therefore vitally important for the Brotherhoods to join this fall with all other progressives to defeat the anti-New Deal coalition.

Unperturbed Tories

THE farther one goes to the right in our internal politics, the less one worries about the indictment handed down by a federal grand jury against eighteen persons charged with Nazi espionage in the United States. The entire tory press seems agreed that the conspiracy, in the words of the New York *Herald Tribune,* "does not, so far, seem to have amounted to much." Viewed in terms of their actual achievement, the spies probably did earn less than what they cost the brown network. To stop here, however, is to miss the point.

The all-important thing about the grand jury's revelations is in their implications for our foreign policy. The Nazi government maintains "fifth columns" in every democratic country in the world. Their objective is to undermine the resistance of the democratic forces to fascism—to undermine from within. Espionage is but one of the many means which they employ. Isolationists may say and write what they will about leaving fascism alone, but fascism refuses to return the favor.

It would be the gravest error to take this spying activity lightly and to wait until it develops on the scale of a Spain, a France, or a Czechoslovakia, where the fascist network is a basic political fact. The grand jury did well to indict officers in the German War Ministry; it could have gone even higher, to Hitler, von Ribbentrop, Goebbels, Goering. This is not simply another spy trial. It is an integral part of the international struggle between democracy and fascism. It is the American counterpart of the fascist conspiracy so effectively exposed at the Moscow trials. Only those who take fascism lightly can with any consistency dismiss German espionage in this country as a matter of no importance.

Japan Plunges Deeper

SINCE their disastrous defeat at Taierhchwang in April and the reorganization of the Tokyo Cabinet late in May, the Japanese military have followed a double policy. They decided to plunge even farther into the interior of China, to capture Hankow in the shortest possible time. The main

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emphasis is still military. At the same time, all sorts of trial balloons have been sent aloft about eventual mediation to end the war. This second bit of business is essentially for British consumption; though it may appear in conflict with the aggressive nature of the Japanese military policy, it is really complementary.

The Japanese know they must take Hankow or lose all chance of capitalizing on the greatest military adventure in their history. So they are throwing everything into the drive along the Yangtze. They have even weakened their garrisons in Manchuria in order to get seasoned and highly trained troops for this central front. But the future for Japan looks dark unless the war can somehow be brought to a halt in time. Tokyo hopes to solve this problem—its crumbling economic position—by reaching an agreement with the Chamberlain forces in Britain.

Public announcement to this effect may be expected once the result of the Hankow drive is known. Meanwhile, a disquieting press report from Shanghai informs us that Japan is already purchasing new equipment for the strategic Shanghai-Nanking and Shanghai-Hangchow railroads, with funds supplied by the Anglo-China Finance Corp., largely in British hands.

Thus far, the Japanese drive against Hankow is meeting with little success. The flood waters of the Yellow River forced the invaders to shift their line of attack to the less favorable route along the Yangtze instead of the plain of Honan. The Chinese are making the kind of stand before Hankow that they made before Suchow and that is the worst news Tokyo has heard since Taierhchwang.

CIO Wins on the Coast

BACK in 1934, long before the CIO was organized, longshoremen in every West Coast port struck for union recognition, higher wages, hiring halls. The employers, who at first refused to consider a coastwide agreement granting uniform conditions in all ports, lost the strike and were forced to grant this major concession. Since then, West Coast maritime workers have held and consolidated union gains. Led by their militant president, Harry Bridges, the longshoremen defied Joseph P. Ryan of unsavory record. Last year they entered the CIO. Their new union was known as the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union.

The AF of L did not accept defeat. In alliance with Dave Beck, labor czar of Seattle, and the waterfront employers' associations, Ryan's men on the West Coast disrupted, attacked, terrorized, obstructed. The ILWU demanded settlement of jurisdictional disputes by the National Labor Relations Board. And after exhaustive investigations, the board designated the ILWU as the exclusive representative of the 12,680 longshoremen in the thirty-one Pacific ports. For the first time a union was certified as the exclusive bargaining agency for workers in an entire area.

This unprecedented decision, providing for unity and peace, turned back the attempts by Joseph P. Ryan to regain what he lost four years ago. Contracts made by the union before it entered the CIO are in the AF of L's name; the employers have stated they would refuse to deal with the CIO in future negotiations and hoped to raise jurisdictional disputes that would weaken the unions. But the Labor Board held "it is essential that the proper collective-bargaining agency be designated so that negotiations for the next period may be facilitated and properly conducted." Under the Wagner act, the board is given authority to decide that the employer unit is the one most appropriate for the purpose of collective bargaining. Since waterfront employers on the West Coast act in unison on all labor questions, the board considered them as a unit. By naming the ILWU as the longshoremen's representative, the board acted to protect a legitimate union to which the overwhelming majority of longshoremen in most ports are affiliated.

Tenure and Democracy

NEW YORK CITY'S Board of Higher Education is to be commended for approving new by-laws giving tenure to college teachers and establishing democratic organization in the city colleges. The board's decision is of more than local significance, not only because it represents a long step in the direction of tenure and democracy, but because it reflects the power of organized labor under a progressive municipal administration.

Under Mayor LaGuardia, who was reelected in 1937 by a coalition of progressive forces, Tammany's grip over the city's educational system has been broken. The campaign conducted by the college teachers' union and other teacher organizations owed its success partly to the fact that a democratic front of the electorate succeeded last fall. The lesson is clear: the fight of teachers and other workers for their economic and professional demands cannot be separated from their united action in the political field.

Under the new by-laws, teachers acquire tenure on appointment for their fourth year, and cannot be removed thereafter unless they are presented with charges, given a hearing in which they have all the rights accorded to people on trial, and found guilty by a faculty committee. A specific defense of academic freedom is included.

Chairmen of departments are to be elected for three years by a vote of all the members of the department on permanent tenure. Instructors will, for the first time, be granted voting privileges. The present authoritarian regime, which has made possible the existence of a President Robinson at the City College of New York, will be reorganized on a sounder, more democratic basis.

This move should stimulate teacher organization and activity throughout the country. The overwhelming majority of teachers, and particularly college teachers, are still operating under conditions which are astonishingly bad. They have neither tenure nor a voice in the government of their schools. With the splendid victory of the New York City colleges as a guide, they can go forward with greater confidence in the ultimate success of their progressive objectives.

Rank-and-File Victory

UNDER the leadership of Louis Weinstock, District Council No. 9 of the Brotherhood of Painters in New York City raised its membership from five thousand to thirteen thousand. The racketeering groups lost power, and the painters became leaders of the progressive trade-union movement.

Two days before Louis Weinstock was to come up for reelection to the district council, the reactionary general executive board of the union expelled him. The charges were undisguisedly Red-baiting: Weinstock was accused of diverting union funds for "Communist" purposes—because under him the painters had supported the American Labor Party, the Spanish government, the fight of relief workers for an adequate standard of living. The expulsion amounted to a crude attempt to get rid of Weinstock and all of his rank-and-file ticket.

But when the painters went to the polls, they overruled the executive board. They elected Albert Ghidoni as secretary-treasurer of the union and elected nine business agents—all of them supporters of the Weinstock rank-and-file ticket. Painters in Brooklyn endorsed progressive leadership. And when the progressives took their case to the state Supreme Court, Judge Cotillo forbade interference with Weinstock's candidacy for union office.

The victory of the progressives was complete. The result of the expulsion order was to unite and strengthen the union and to increase the resolve of the membership to entrust progressive rank and filers with leadership of the union.

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Forsythe's Page

The Beauty of Silence

THE correspondents who have been beating me so brutally about the temples over the matter of George Bernard Shaw will need to be informed that I was not unaware of his play, *On the Rocks,* when I wrote the original article asking if Shaw were a fascist. Indeed, that was the excuse for the query, although I based my argument that he was not a fascist upon *Heartbreak House* and upon his older plays.

Without any doubt whatsoever, *On the Rocks* is a fascist play. In addition it stinks. It is natural to think that the Federal Theatre would be flattered at having Shaw's consent to present his works, but it is dreadful that they should have picked on this little cripple for their first production. It has been announced that it will close for the summer and reopen in the fall, taking advantage of a surprising acclaim from the New York critics. It is my hope that Hallie Flannigan, George Kondolf, and their talented assistants will think the matter over carefully during the hot months and agree to forget about it. It is dangerous business at best and nothing good will come of it.

The play was so well analyzed in these columns last week by Eugene Konecky and Anthony Buttitta that I can only add my agreement. For a time I endeavored to convince myself that Shaw was presenting a remarkable picture of a muddled liberal—and indeed he was doing that—but in the concluding scenes in the Cabinet rooms at 10 Downing St. and particularly in the conversation between Chavender, the Prime Minister, and old Hipney, the disillusioned labor leader, there was no longer any doubt that Shaw had gone haywire.

Briefly, he tells of the English Prime Minister who is baffled by the problems of unemployment and of the general state of capitalist decay. Returning from a vacation, where he has read Marx, he presents a program for a misty form of Socialism which is greeted warmly by all his Cabinet associates except the outright fascist Foreign Minister and is rejected by the labor representatives from the Isle of Cats, who will have none of a program which calls for regulation of the unions and nationalization of the land with compensation.

My first intention was to blast Robert Ross, the director, for making the main character, Chavender, an exact copy of Shaw himself, complete as to beard, clothes (second act), and mannerisms. By doing this he makes Shaw responsible for every dumb thing Chavender says, including the sappiness of the first act when he seems to have all the stupidity of a Wall Street broker. So far as I can discover, there is nothing in the preface to the play or in the play itself which leads one to believe that Chavender is to be regarded as Shaw. Indeed, he seems more aptly to fit Hipney, the disillusioned. However, that point is forgotten in the last scene when both Chavender and Hipney go off on a fascist tirade which asks for a Hitler or Mussolini who will take both capital and labor by the scruff of their necks and get some cooperation out of them. They deny democracy, scoff at the notion that the people are ever able to govern themselves, and ask plainly for the big stick of the dictator. Near the end of *Heartbreak House,* old Captain Shotover says, "Any fool can rule with a stick; chaos is better." Now Chavender and Hipney are both demanding the stick.

As I say, I was aware of *On the Rocks* before, but I had no idea how bad it was. Whether it is the natural end of a man who never was clear about social problems and always had in his system the Nietzschean notion of the superman is still not clear. It may all be part of his life-force stuff, and assuredly it is not pleasant to think that a brain as brilliant as his can be responsible for his present rantings. About the best I can do is hope that his new play, *Geneva,* which will be done this summer at the Malverne Festival, will bring him back to sanity. I am still unable to believe that he has definitely gone fascist, but one more like *On the Rocks* will leave me no alternative. The English differ from us in one important respect as regards artists and authors. They have a loyalty which prompts them to say that while *On the Rocks* is awful, one must forget it and remember that Shaw wrote *Heartbreak House.* By contrast we are ruthless. If a man has written three masterpieces and falls down on the fourth, we are certain to attack him viciously for his failure and even to hint that perhaps we were wrong about the others. Even that, however, can't hide the ineptitude of such as *The Apple Cart, Too True to Be Good, Village Wooing, The Millionairess,* and *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles,* all of his latter period and all terrible.

What is evident about the latter plays is that while paradox can be a most effective literary device when a twist can reveal a great truth, it can be the supreme bore when the twist is merely a twist. I am convinced that it accounts in some part for Shaw's present plight. Anyone who has tried to write a play —and anybody who says he hasn't is a liar— will know that there is a supreme temptation to vary the pace of the proceedings and surprise the audience by suddenly reversir what has gone before. This is particularly tr of a work which depends upon the brillian of the dialogue and the ideas. When nothir is happening but talk, the talk must furnis the dramatic twists which are the only e: cuse for the play. In former times Shaw ha the inestimable advantage of dealing with public which lived in a world of illusions What were considered his most outrageou statements were later proved to be the sim plest of truths. He is now in a period of his tory when surprises of this sort are no long possible. He meets it (this is merely a sh in the dark) by reversing everything tha arises, no matter how much he may believ the opposite. It is a temptation, as I can testif from dabbling with playwrighting myself Even a radical writer finds himself writing things he entirely disagrees with, just because they seem at the moment dramatically striking.

But it is equally evident that no man who has any regard for his integrity will succumb to this temptation, a thing Shaw has done in *On the Rocks.* In short, it must be more than technical difficulties which produce such a stew of sick thinking and bad dramaturgy a this. When I spoke of the fact that Shaw always boasted that "Marx made a man o me," I unfortunately gave the impression tha he had also made a Marxist of him, whic happens not to be true. He utilized the ma velous Marxist method of analysis but alwa refuted Marxist theory and practice. Leni wrote about the Fabians in *State and Revolution:* "All these gentry, while playing a great, very often a predominant role, in parliamentary work and in the journalism of the party, reject outright the dictatorship of the proletariat and carry out a policy of unconcealed opportunism. . . . There is really no difference between them and the petty-bourgeois democrats."

As a consequence Shaw has come to be a mouther of pseudo-radical doctrine and an ardent admirer of Hitler and Mussolini. It is a question now of whether at his age he is capable of understanding where his Fabian theories have led him. In essence it is the problem of the liberal everywhere. That Wolcott Gibbs in his review of *On the Rocks* in the *New Yorker* considers it a Communist play is less shocking than the possibility that there are liberals who feel that there is a great deal in what Shaw says. There *is* a great deal but it is all bad. The play ends with the marchers outside the window singing "England Arise!" which I understand is the theme song of Mosley's Black Shirts.

If I still hope that Shaw will not turn out a fascist, it is because I am stooping to subterfuge. Unless his new play, *Geneva,* brings him back to normal I will need to assume that there are two Shaws—the muddled but right-minded gentleman who died in the late 1920s; and the old codger, aged eighty, who now spends his weekends with Lady Astor at Cliveden. Perhaps I should have kept still in the first place.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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A. Birnbaum

"Just a minute, Adolf. Uncle Neville is getting it for you."

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THE NEW TREASON

"Fifth Columns" Within the Democracies

THEODORE DRAPER

IN THE ten weeks I spent in Europe, visiting France, Britain, Geneva, Czechoslovakia, and Spain in rather rapid succession, the biggest event by far was the Czech mobilization of May 21. The facts of the mobilization are well known by now, but the crisis as a whole remains the best point of departure for a general view of the European line-up today. The European press is still exploring the full implications of this remarkable action by a country everybody thought was doomed. The farther one gets away from the event, the larger it looks.

When I came to Paris, early in April, the political climate was distinctly chilly; the second Blum government had just fallen. This was no great catastrophe in itself except that there was no possibility of anything better following. In addition, they shiver in Prague every time a French cabinet totters. Then the new team of Daladier and Bonnet decided to make a pilgrimage to London and this gave me an opportunity to take the political temperature there. Informed opinion, it turned out, was even more pessimistic in Britain. Europe seemed a vale of tears; and the meeting of the League Council in May did not give much comfort for the future.

Then, for one inspired weekend, the world brightened.

The Czechs succeeded in doing something unparalleled since Hitler came to power. They succeeded in confronting France and Britain on the one hand, and Germany and Italy on the other, with the ultimate choice in world politics. Either side could have had war on May 21. France and Britain could have had war by continuing to do nothing, by failing to put pressure on Berlin. Germany and Italy could have had war by carrying out their unmistakable threat against Czechoslovakia. But, it developed, neither side wanted war just yet, though for wholly different reasons.

France and Britain did not want war because their fundamental interests are peaceful. This is unquestionably true of France, whose leaders have gone wrong only because they have tried to serve peace by capitulation to blackmail. The policy of capitulation, for France, is worse than folly; it is suicide. The British position is more complicated, but essentially the same. England is extremely vulnerable to that most barbarous form of modern warfare: aerial bombardment of open cities. In Spain, the soldiers tell you that they infinitely prefer being at the front during a siege than in Barcelona or Valencia during a bombardment. Stanley Baldwin was not talking in riddles when he said, during his term in office, that the British frontier started at the Rhine. All the same, the masters of British policy for five years now have been encouraging Hitler to make aggression after aggression. In this, they have assumed that they could keep Western Europe immune from a war in Eastern Europe. This is their stupidity. The assumption is nonsensical; the Czechs proved it so on May 21. Had not Chamberlain realized that German aggression against Czechoslovakia would inevitably involve France and Britain from the start, he would not have put pressure on Berlin. Chamberlain wants Czechoslovakia to agree to an Austrian peace, but not to a Spanish war.

Why, then, did not Paris and London repeat their past capitulations on May 21?

The answer, I believe, is that they could not, even if they had wanted. The initiative was simply not in their hands.

Should the Czech-Soviet pact ever need to be enforced, which presupposes that the Franco-Czech pact has already come into action, then the brunt of aid for Czechoslovakia will have to come from the Soviets rather than France. Geographic position makes this inevitable. The time is past when Paris alone could safeguard Prague. But Paris needs Prague now more than ever before. If Czechoslovakia loses its independence, then France loses all of its remaining influence in Central Europe and thus completes its decline to second-rate status in the European balance of power. Paris needs Moscow if for no other reason than that Paris needs Prague. The tie between these capitals is a natural one; Paris and Prague are not the least to benefit thereby.

Now one step further. Objectively, France has quite as strong a hold upon Britain as Britain has upon France. A war between Germany and France, if France lost, would place the British Isles at the virtual mercy of the Germans. It is significant that opposition attacks against Chamberlain's rearmament program have been chiefly directed against the ARP—Air Raid Precautions.

What has tended to make the French subordinate to the British are not any immutable "natural" factors but unnecessary political capitulations on the issues of Ethiopia and Spain.

The only thing that can rescue France from its present unhappy role is firmness. Before Austria fell, Schuschnigg looked longingly for encouragement toward Paris and London but received none. So Hitler's legions marche A show of French and British displeasu could have stopped Hitler then. This is show by the fact that the German ambassador Prague made three visits to Foreign Minist Krofta for assurances that Czechoslovakia would not mobilize to prevent *Anschluss*. The Czechs did not dream of acting alone in such an emergency. But if Czechslovakia counted so much in the German plan, France and Britain certainly could have exerted sufficient pressure to keep Austria independent.

The Czechs, however, did not have to pu their sole trust in Paris and London. They were sure of an excellent army and of a government which, for all its flaws, is strong at the very top, especially in the presidency and the General Staff. The Czechs knew that they have it in their power to convert any aggression against themselves into a general European war. They can cut short the string of Hitler's cheap victories. But the condition for all this is that the Czechs themselves stand firm in their determination to resist.

The general view in Europe is that two factors forced Hitler to change his mind about invading Czechoslovakia on May 21: the Czech mobilization itself and British representations in Berlin. This is true but it needs some explanation. There is a causal *connection* between the Czech mobilization and the British pressure. When the Czechs showed that they did not intend to go down without fighting, Bonnet hastened to come to their support. This, in effect, put the Czech-Soviet pact in operation, for Litvinov had previously declared that the Soviets intended to fulfill their agreement to the letter.

Thus, May 21 proved that if Paris, Prague, and Moscow stand solidly together, London must follow suit. If we could only add Washington to this triumvirate, the pressure upon London would be irresistible.

One reason the Czech Communists made so good a showing in the recent elections is that they dramatized the need for unity between France, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. The most successful piece of Communist propaganda was a simple little map showing Czechoslovakia flanked by France and the Soviet Union. A white arrow extended from Minsk to Prague; over the arrow was written: "Forty minutes." Another arrow came from Strasbourg to Prague; over this arrow was written: "Seventy minutes." The voters understood.

Of course, it is too bad that the only thing which forced France and Britain to act with effectiveness was an actual mobilization for war. Europe cannot afford to risk many more —if another—such zero hours. This itself is a measure of the European and world crisis. But a mobilization for war which helps peace is infinitely better than war. The historic lesson of May 21 is that you can only maintain world peace today by being willing and able to resist aggression by the most energetic action. When that action is collective, it is unfailingly effective.

I have emphasized the role of the Czechs

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cause it is most recent but the Spaniards ave been doing the same thing for almost vo years. By their very struggle, they have ld up a general war. They have forced aly and Germany to spend so much in men and materials for every kilometer of Spanish soil that the dictators could not afford to pay for a more ambitious aggression. That is why Hitler is now waiting in the hope that Chamberlain will yet be able to make Czechoslovakia into a second Austria.

This brings us to a strange state of affairs. Britain is today conspiring to undo the work of May 21. There is every likelihood that Czechoslovakia will see another major crisis before the end of autumn. If so, it will be because Chamberlain will have succeeded in undermining the foundations of Czech resistance, because the Germans think that he has succeeded. If France actually closes the Pyrenean frontier for an extended length of time, Spain's difficulties would immeasurably increase.

And yet, the fate of Spain and Czechoslovakia is the fate of democratic and peaceful Europe.

Is Europe crazy? It is becoming a fad to say so, especially in certain American circles. At every turning point in history, some people throw up their hands in despair and save themselves a lot of hard thinking by the simple expedient of calling what they do not like "inexplicable madness." French policy, in particular, seems to be a little insane. Of course it is not. French weakness has its causes deep in French politics, concretely in the politics of the French Right. It is essential to understand this policy because every democratic country with a capitalist economy is faced with the same peril.

In every country I visited, a certain fundamental pattern of political behavior is discernible. France and Czechoslovakia are good examples because they are sufficiently dissimilar to emphasize my point.

In France, there is a left wing which wants its country to regain its independence of action, self-reliance, and self-respect in world affairs. It deeply deplores France's humiliating subservience to Britain in recent years. Doubtless, the most consistent exponents of this view are the Communists; but it extends deep into the bourgeoisie. Men like Pertinax of *l'Europe Nouvelle* and Emile Buré of *l'Ordre* are waging a good fight against Chamberlain's grip on the Quai d'Orsay. The Socialist leadership tends to agree in principle and to vacillate in practice. Only a month ago, when a Communist motion to open the French frontier to arms for Spain came before the Chamber's Commission on Foreign Affairs, the Socialist deputies abstained.

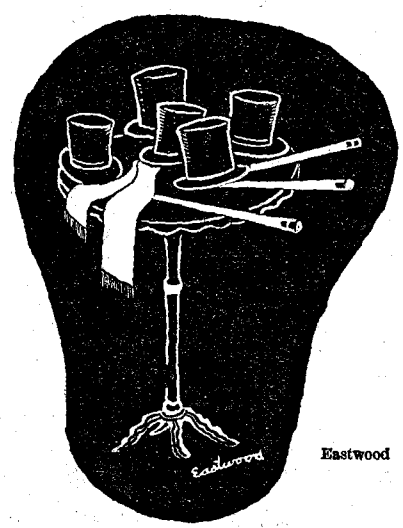
The right wing is bent upon weakening France by keeping her servile before Chamberlain. The reactionary, but well-edited, weekly, *Gringoire,* the mouthpiece of André Tardieu and Goebbels, is the best expression of this viewpoint. Read *Gringoire* or any one of two dozen other papers and Chamberlain has never committed a fault, is the greatest living statesman and the salvation of France. Flandin and Laval are the outstanding parliamentary manipulators of this tendency. It has many influential friends within the Radical-Socialist Party, such as Bonnet, the present Foreign Minister; from time to time, even such well-informed and well-intentioned persons as Madame Tabouis, the internationally famous diplomatic commentator of *l'Oeuvre*, fall victim to it.

Between these two fundamental oppositions are all sorts of wavering and indecisive persons and creeds who sometimes hold the balance of power as long as the Socialists do not make up their minds.

In Czechoslovakia, similar divergences. The left wing is determined to keep the country strong, democratic, and independent. Its main support comes from President Benes' anti-fascist National Socialist Party and the Communists. The Foreign Minister, Kamil Krofta, is a firm supporter of Benes. The dominant minds of the General Staff are definitely with Benes. But the Socialists, both Czech and German, tend to play an even more ambiguous role than in France.

The Czech Right is a complex affair. As the formula in Prague goes, this little nation has one so-called Trojan Horse and two "fifth columns." The Henlein movement is, of course, the Trojan Horse since it does not even pretend to uphold Czech sovereignty. The Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Polish, and other fascists (each nationality has a fascist sector) constitute one "fifth column." In the past year, the German fascists fixed up a more or less open alliance with the fascists of the other nationalities. The other "fifth column" is even more dangerous because it holds positions within the government. This is the right wing of the Agrarian Party, the largest single party in the country, controlled by big business and land-owning interests but supported by the bulk of the peasantry. The Minister of the Interior, Jan Cerny, is a right-wing Agrarian; that is the explanation for Henlein's unhindered reign of terror in the Sudeten regions until May 21.

Somewhere in the center are the more progressive Agrarians. The Prime Minister, Hodza, belongs to this group. Unfortunately, the machinery of the Agrarian Party is in control of the right-wing Czech Agrarians;



Eastwood

Hodza, a Slovak, owes his strength to Slovakian peasant support.

The foreign policy of the Right in both France and Czechoslovakia can be expressed in one word: *treason.*

This may shock many people not yet accustomed to the idea that reaction can betray *national* interests. But the facts cannot be denied.

Just as I was leaving France for home, Flandin delivered a speech in which he expressed his astonishment that the French government was ready to issue a mobilization order on May 21. Then he uttered a sentence which has become a fighting ground: "I say with all my strength that this is impossible as long as France itself is not attacked. . . ." In other words, France must renounce its pacts of mutual assistance with Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, must stand idle no matter whether Britain, Switzerland, Belgium, Soviet Russia, or Czechoslovakia is attacked.

At about the same time, de la Rocque made a speech at Lunéville. He asked, bravely enough, "If Franco is the victor, what will be the effect upon France?" He answered himself as follows: "I admit that our Southwestern frontier will need certain precautions for safety." Well then! But he concluded, "In consequence, we support the victory of Franco." And the defeat of France!

What is this but treason? What has it been called in other times? What could be clearer than the relation between Spain and France? Not even the fascists themselves dare to deny that France will be seriously weakened with a fascist Spain as neighbor. Not even they were pleased with Mussolini's speech in Genoa which humiliated France with the most calculated brutality. Yet Mussolini is still their hero. And Hitler who vowed to come to a final reckoning with France. And Chamberlain who has made the French Foreign Office into an appendage of No. 10 Downing Street.

There was a time, not so long ago, when Flandin himself played a prominent role in making the Franco-Soviet pact. Likewise Laval. For fifteen years, a succession of French right-wing Premiers carefully cultivated friends and allies in Central Europe. All that is past. What was sacred duty yesterday is Bolshevism today. To help republican Spain and republican Czechoslovakia is to take orders from Moscow. But France! France helps only itself by helping republican Spain, Czechoslovakia, and Russia!

The case is even clearer with the Czechs, for the very life of the state is at stake. A Czech fascist is by definition a traitor to the very existence of Czechoslovakia. In Spain, the same holds true, for republican Spain is fighting for Spanish independence.

Thus, no democratic nation can compromise with fascism without compromising its status as a power; the small democratic nations are threatened with extinction and the great ones with decline. Within each of the democratic powers are the allies and agents

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of the fascist powers; the "fifth column" is an international phenomenon of the most crucial importance. How these traitors work is a matter of time and circumstance but they all aim at the destruction or impotence of their own people, their own fatherland. No man, no movement can serve Hitler and France, Hitler and Czechoslovakia, Hitler and the United States, at the same time. These "fifth columns" have such extraordinary influence because they own banks, dominate industries, control money markets. They have their puppets in the government, their tools in the labor movement, their propaganda ministries in the press, their storm troops in the fascist leagues. They are more afraid of their own people than of the menace of the fascist oppressors of other peoples.

★

UNTENABLE GIBRALTAR

INDICATIVE of the havoc wrought in the sphere of British imperial strategy by the government's policy of "non-intervention" in the Spanish war is the fact that the appropriate naval and military authorities are now discussing with all seriousness the advisability of abandoning Gibraltar in the event of war in the Mediterranean.

Since the existence of German and Italian batteries at Tarifa, Algeciras, San Roque, and La Linea and, confronting the Rock, on the coast of the Spanish zone of Morocco was first revealed by the *Week* in the early stages of the conflict, British agents have been diligently investigating the position.

Recently a comprehensive report of their findings and conclusions was received in London. That report, accompanied by maps detailing the exact positions, number, and caliber of the German guns, confirmed the very worst suspicions.

Very briefly, it declared that, in the opinion of the authors, Gibraltar would become rapidly untenable in the event of a major Mediterranean conflict; that the proposal to slip the British fleet past the German batteries under cover of a smoke screen was as fantastic as it was impracticable; and that it was urgently necessary to locate and begin work on an "alternative base," preferably in Portugal.

In spite of the fact that certain of the more incredulous elements wished to dismiss the report in its entirety as "alarmist nonsense, sir," it was, and is still being, given the very closest attention.

So much so, indeed, that the necessary feelers were put out in Lisbon when the British naval delegation visited Portugal recently.

As a result, and with an atmosphere of better-make-the-best-of-a-bad-job existing in quarters concerned, negotiations for the establishment of the proposed "alternative base" at Faro, on the extreme south Algarve coast of Portugal, are now in an advanced stage.—THE WEEK *(London)*.

THE GUILD GROWS UP

The Newspapermen Find Their Place in the Labor Movement

ROBERT ANGE

AT THE fifth annual convention of the American Newspaper Guild, just ended in Toronto, it was interesting to note Heywood Broun devouring a live infant for breakfast before taking the president's chair to call the convention to order, Secy.-Treas. Victor Pasche paying off delegates in bags of gold distinctly labeled "Moscow," and Exec. Vice-Pres. Jonathan Eddy tossing a TNT bomb into the crowded lobby of the King Edward Hotel at tea time, to keep in practice for the violence and lawlessness with which the guild carries on its strikes.

At least these things would have been interesting to note if this labor union of white-collar newspaper workers had acted, at its convention, like the sort of labor union its best enemies would currently have you believe it is.

For the newspaper publishers have recently been saying in their own assemblies and hinting in their newspapers that the Newspaper Guild is radical, violent, unreasonable, not like the long-established, good labor unions in the newspaper mechanical departments—a bad labor union, this guild. But one thing they have not been saying, and that nobody inside the guild or out says anymore, is that the guild is not a labor union, or even that it ought not to be one.

This reporter recalls long sessions held in New York at which the discussion was waged bitterly and at great length over inclusion of the words "collective bargaining" in a constitutional statement of the purposes of the guild. In these days many wanted a "professional" guild, "something like the Bar Association," a respectable (and innocuous) Society of Gentlemen of the Press which would deal with journalistic ethics and maybe something about improving the already high standards of the profession. Collective bargaining smacked too much of labor unions—you know, people like longshoremen and, well, printers. Newspaper printers were much better paid than most reporters, but they were not members of a profession and they weren't individualists. Reporters were confirmed individualists and they would never give up their individualism, more or less rugged, for a mess of collective bargaining.

So it was said. But all that had been left far behind before the Toronto convention. That gathering proved to be less exciting, because less controversial, than any of its four predecessors. Between the first convention and the fifth, the guild had recognized that it was a trade union, part of the American labor movement, by affiliating with the AF of L; and then that it was a progressive trade union by joining the CIO. It had implemented that decision, during the past year, by adding to its strictly editorial membership workers from the less exalted commercial departments, advertising solicitors, circulation men, business-office clerks, bookkeepers, cashiers, messengers.

With a membership of 16,700 it continued to grow, despite recession. It signed new contracts with improved pay, hours, guarantees of job security, industrial-union contracts covering entire newspaper shops (except for the mechanical departments, long organized in their own older unions). It brought to such mighty publishing businesses as the New York *Daily News, World-Telegram,* and *Mirror* the boast that they were all-union now!

All that had been achieved against the powerful and organized opposition of the most class-conscious group of employers in the country, the publishers, who had tested the guild in more than a dozen strikes during the past year—and educated it. When an early speaker concluded with the peroration, "The only virtue worthy of respect is organized power—power—*power!*" the delegates clapped hands with not much more than perfunctory applause. What the brother said from the rostrum was an accepted truth to them.

A dramatic critic could justly complain that the Toronto convention was a poor show. It lacked the dramatic clashes of the fourth in St. Louis, the third in New York, the second in Cleveland. It came to within twenty-four hours of adjournment before the first roll-call vote was taken.

Its theme song, to switch the metaphor, was unity—unity of labor, unity of labor with all the democratic-liberal forces in this country and in the world, and unity within the guild itself and within the convention.

Specifically, the convention did these things:

Reelected the Broun-Eddy-Pasche administration, with a contest only on Eddy, on the sound theory not only that it is bad stuff to change horses in the middle of a recession stream, but that it is silly to change a good horse, if you want to get along, at any time.

Endorsed the decision to hold a national CIO convention with a view to establishing a permanent CIO organization as a means not of warring on the AF of L but of convincing its leaders that there must be peace between two equals.

Adjusted the method of calculating convention representation so as to regularize dues collections.

Amended rules for calling a referendum.

Urged locals to redouble efforts in organizing the

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still unorganized workers in the newspaper industry.

Declared against rising fascism in the United States and Canada and the war aggressions of "the fascist governments of Spain and Italy and the militarists of Japan," because "the efforts of the organized labor movement to achieve industrial and political democracy for the people of the United States and Canada cannot be divided from the efforts to achieve and retain democracy throughout the world."

Declared for a Japanese boycott.

And for "freedom of the press," which the publishers yearn after too, but vitalized by "integrity of the news."

Throughout the convention, the New York delegation, with a block of thirty votes, or about one-fifth of the total, played a consciously subdued role. New York, like the rest of the guild, had learned from experience. In earlier conventions the boys from Akron and Sioux City and points west and south had come to the convention city with the determination to keep a watchful eye on the "radicals" from New York and to prevent them from putting anything over.

In Toronto, New York made no speeches, waged no open convention warfare. Once when a vote was carried New York's way by a narrow margin, New York asked for a reconsideration and, on the subsequent vote, refrained from voting at all so that it might not "impose its will on the convention." The point at issue was minor. The effect in still further wiping out lingering remnants of sectionalism is important.

The extent to which a unity of interest and a uniformity of trade-union education had been achieved in the guild might be judged from this, that the outcome would probably have been changed in no important aspect if the New York delegation had stayed home —or if New York alone had made up the convention.

It was a convention without a plethora of speeches, without oratory. John Brophy, CIO director, brought the convention's single high thrill in a quiet talk on the place of a white-collar union, a newspaper union, in the whole trade-union movement, in the fight for democracy and decency in the world.

A long time ago it used to be said—and probably believed—that the newspaperman should stay out of such things. His function was simply to report, objectively, what he saw around him, whether it was a three-alarm fire or a political campaign or a strike involving hundreds of thousands of workers.

A lot of people will still tell you that the newspaperman should be interested in the world, should try to learn about things, but shouldn't try to learn by joining with his fellow-workers in an effort to improve the thing he sees. Otherwise, of course, his point of view might be warped.

We know that's wrong. We know that joining *in the modern* labor movement hasn't warped our point of view, whether we work in the news department or whether we work in the business office. We know that we've done something that is good and intelligent in joining with the rest of our fellow wage-earners in the labor movement to improve the conditions under which we work and live.

Only through organization and political action by our organizations can we bring a better economy into existence.

This convention of newspaper people, rising to its feet with cheers, knew that it was s[illegible]

HIGH TIDE IN HARLEM

Joe Louis as a Symbol of Freedom

RICHARD WRIGHT

THE colossal bowl of seventy thousand hazy faces, an oval-shaped tableau compounded of criss-crossed beams of light and shadow, waited almost in silence for the gong to sound that would start the Louis-Schmeling million-dollar fight. The gaze of the seventy thousand eyes was centered on the "squared circle," a single diadem-like spot of canvas lit to blinding whiteness under the intense glare of overhead floodlights. So dwarfed was the ring by the mammoth stadium that it seemed that each man and woman was straining forward to peer at a colorful puppet show.

The Louis-Schmeling fight for the heavyweight championship of the world at the Yankee Stadium was one of the greatest dramas of make-believe ever witnessed in America, a drama which manipulated the common symbols and impulses in the minds and bodies of millions of people so effectively as to put to shame our professional playwrights, our O'Neills, our Lawsons, and our Caldwells. Promoter Mike Jacobs, prompted purely by commercial motives, has accidentally won the rare right, whether he wants to claim it or not, of wearing the purple robes customarily reserved for Euripides and Sophocles.

Each of the seventy thousand who had so eagerly jammed his way into the bowl's steel tiers under the open sky had come already emotionally conditioned as to the values that would triumph if *his* puppet won. Attached to each puppet, a white puppet and a black puppet, was a configuration of social images whose intensity and clarity had been heightened through weeks of skillful and constant agitation; social images whose emotional appeal could evoke attitudes tantamount to two distinct ways of life in the world today. Whichever puppet went down the Greek route to defeat that night would leave the path clear for the imperious sway of the balked impulses of one side or the other. The puppet emerging victorious would be the symbol of a fond wish gratified, would feed the starved faith of men caught in the mesh of circumstances.

Joe Louis, the black puppet who wore black trunks, was the betting favorite; but that was no indication as to how much actual sentiment there was for him among the seventy thousand spectators, for men like to bet on winners. And, too, just how much sentiment there was for Max Schmeling, the white puppet who wore purple trunks, no one, perhaps, will ever know; for now that the violent drama is ended the backers of the loser do not want to parade their disappointment for the scorn of others. But the two puppets were dissimilar enough in "race, creed, and previous condition of servitude" as to make their partisans wax militantly hopeful.

But out beyond the walls of the stadium were twelve million Negroes to whom the black puppet symbolized the living refutation of the hatred spewed forth daily over radios, in newspapers, in movies, and in books about their lives. Day by day, since their alleged emancipation, they have watched a picture of themselves being painted as lazy, stupid, and diseased. In helpless horror they have suffered the attacks and exploitation which followed in the wake of their being branded as "inferiors." True, hundreds of thousands of these Negroes would have preferred that that refutation could have been made in some form other than pugilism; but so effectively and completely have they been isolated and restricted in vocation that they rarely have had the opportunity to participate in the meaningful processes of America's national life. Jim Crowed in the army and navy, barred from many trades and professions, excluded from commerce and finance, relegated to menial positions in government, segregated residentially, denied the right of franchise for the most part; in short, forced to live a separate and impoverished life, they were glad for even the meager acceptance of their humanity implied in the championship of Joe Louis.

Visits to Joe Louis' training camp revealed throngs of Negroes standing around in a state of deep awe, waiting for just one glimpse of their champion. They were good, simple-hearted people, longing deeply for something of their own to be loyal to. When Joe appeared, a hush fell upon them and they stared. They took Joe into their hearts because he was a public idol and was respectfully enshrined in the public's imagination in a way they knew they would never be.

But because Joe's a Negro, even though he has to his credit a most enviable list of victories, there have been constant warnings issued by the Bilbos and Ellenders from south of the Mason-Dixon Line as to the wisdom of allowing a Negro to defeat a white man in public. The reactionary argument ran that such spectacles tended to create in Negroes too much pride and made them "intractable."

Naturally, Max Schmeling's victory over

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Louis two years ago was greeted with elation in reactionary quarters. A close study of Louis' stance, which revealed that he could be hit, together with a foul blow delivered after the bell, enabled the German boxer to win. Louis' defeat came as a shock to the boxing world and provided material for countless conversations and speculations. It was taken for granted that the second-rate Schmeling's defeat of the then reigning champion, the aging Braddock, was but a matter of time. But due to squabbles among promoters, Louis, not Schmeling, fought Braddock for the championship and won the title by a knockout in a thrilling bout in Chicago. Immediately the Nazi press, in America and in Germany, launched a campaign of slurs against Louis, dubbing him the "so-called champion," and declaring that Schmeling's prior victory over Louis was proof of "Negro inferiority." Schmeling boasted to the press that it would be easy for him to defeat the Negro again because (1) Negroes never forgot beatings, (2) his mere "white" presence would be enough to throw fear into Louis' heart, and (3) he would enter the ring with a "psychological edge" over the Negro. An open friend of Hitler and an avowed supporter of the Nazis, Schmeling caught the fancy of many reactionary Americans, plus the leaders of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, Japan, and even certain circles in England.

To bolster the aims of the forces of fascism, Schmeling's victory was interpreted to mean the ability of the "Aryan race to out-think inferior races." The logical implication of such a line of reasoning was that all Negroes, colonial people, and small nations were inherently backward, physically cowardly, a drag upon the rest of civilization, and should be conquered and subjected for the benefit of mankind.

But when faced with this specious proposition, the common people instinctively revolted. They knew that the majority of all prizefighters came from the so-called "backward people," that is, the working class; their capacity to fight stemming from an early life of toil in steel and iron foundries, coal mines, factories, and fields. Consequently, in his fight against Schmeling, Louis carried the good wishes of even the poor whites of the Deep South, something unparalleled in the history of America.

The appearance of the white puppet sent the crowd into a frenzy. The black puppet's ovation seemed incidental. The ring was cleared and the fight was on. The entire seventy thousand rose as one man. At the beginning of the fight there was a wild shriek which gradually died as the seconds flew. What was happening was so stunning that even cheering was out of place. The black puppet, contrary to all Nazi racial laws, w punching the white puppet so rapidly that t eye could not follow the blows. It was n really a fight, it was an act of revenge, dominance, of complete mastery. The bl puppet glided from his corner and simp wiped his feet on the white puppet's face. T black puppet was contemptuous, swift; hi victory was complete, unquestionable, de cisive; his blows must have jarred the marro not only in the white puppet's but in Hitler own bones.

In Harlem, that area of a few square block in upper Manhattan where a quarter of million Negroes are forced to live through an elaborate connivance among landlords, merchants, and politicians, a hundred thousand black people surged out of taprooms, flats, restaurants, and filled the streets and sidewalks like the Mississippi River overflowing in flood time. With their faces to the night sky, they filled their lungs with air and let out a scream of joy that it seemed would never end, and a scream that seemed to come from untold reserves of strength. They wanted to make noise comparable to the happiness bubbling i their hearts, but they were poor and had nothing. So they went to the garbage pails and got tin cans; they went to their kitchens and got tin pots, pans, washboards, wooden boxes, and took possession of the streets. They shouted, sang, laughed, yelled, blew paper horns, clasped hands, and formed weavin snake-lines, whistled, sounded sirens, a honked auto horns. From the windows of t tall, dreary tenements torn scraps of newspaper floated down. With the reiteration that evoked a hypnotic atmosphere, they chanted with eyes half-closed, heads lilting in unison, legs and shoulders moving and touching:

"Ain't you glad? Ain't you glad?"

Knowing full well the political effect of Louis' victory on the popular mind the world over, thousands yelled:

"Heil Louis!"

It was Harlem's mocking taunt to fascist Hitler's boast of the superiority of "Aryans" over other races. And they ridiculed the Nazi salute of the outstretched palm by throwing up their own dark ones to show how little they feared and thought of the humbug of fascist ritual.

With no less than a hundred thousand participating, it was the largest and most spontaneous political demonstration ever seen in Harlem and marked the highest tide of popular political enthusiasm ever witnessed among American Negroes.

Negro voices called fraternally to Jewish-looking faces in passing autos:

"I bet all the Jews are happy tonight!"

Men, women, and children gathered in thick knots and did the Big Apple, the Lindy Hop, the Truck—Harlem's gesture of defianc to the high cost of food, high rent, and mis ery. These ghetto-dwellers, under the stres of the joy of one of their own kind having wiped out the stain of defeat and having thrown the lie of "inferiority" into the teeth of the fascist, threw off restraint and fear

"Quiet, Herr Schmeling. The Führer is trying to think!"

Snow

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ach time a downtown auto slowed, it be-
me covered with Joe Louis rooters, and the
itos looked like clusters of black ripe grapes.
bus stopped and at once became filled with
ghing throngs who "forgot" to pay their
res; children clambered up its tall sides and
awled over the hoods and fenders.

It was the celebration of Louis' victory
ver Carnera, Baer, Pastor, Farr, and Brad-
ock all rolled into one. Ethiopian and Amer-
an flags fluttered. Effigies of Schmeling
alked with the swastika were dragged
rough the streets.

Then, nobody knows from where and no-
ody bothered to ask, there appeared on the
surface of the sea of people white placards
hurling slogans of defiance at fascist preten-
sions and calling upon native lovers of de-
mocracy to be true to democratic ideals. *Oust
Hitler's Spies and Agents; Pass the Anti-
Lynching Bill; Down with Hitler and Mus-
solini; Alabama Produced Joe Louis; Free
the Scottsboro Boys; Democracies Must Fight
Fascism Everywhere.*

Carry the dream on for yourself; lift it
it of the trifling guise of a prizefight cele-
bration and supply the social and economic
details and you have the secret dynamics of
proletarian aspiration. The eyes of these peo-
ple were bold that night. Their fear of prop-
erty, of the armed police fell away. There
was in their chant a hunger deeper than that
for bread as they marched along. In their joy
ey were feeling an impulse which only the
pressed can feel to the full. They wanted
o fling the heavy burden out of their hearts
and embrace the world. They wanted to feel
that their expanding feelings were not lim-
ited; that the earth was theirs as much as
anybody else's; that they did not have to
live by proscription in one corner of it; that
they could go where they wanted to and do
what they wanted to, eat and live where they
wanted to, like others. They wanted to own
things in common and do things in common.
They wanted a holiday.

★

A REPRESENTATIVE LIST

SIXTY-NINE members of the Yale Univer-
sity faculty have signed a petition to
President Roosevelt protesting "the flagrant
unfairness of a policy which plainly acts to
cripple the friendly democratic government of
the Spanish people in its courageous struggle
against the rebels and their fascist allies."
The list of names includes representatives of
virtually every department in the university.
Among the outstanding signatories are Prof.
C. E. A. Winslow, who has been an Ameri-
can member of the League of Nations' Sec-
ion on Public Health; Prof. Ellsworth
Huntington, famous geographer; Walton
Hale Hamilton, Law School professor and
President Roosevelt's special adviser on con-
umer problems; and Prof. E. Wight Bakke,
consultant to the Social Security Board; Dean
uther A. Weigle of the Divinity School.

Readers' Forum

Defeat Davey

TO NEW MASSES: Things are happening out here in Akron, O., that perhaps will interest you. Gov. Martin Davey, the tree surgeon who has been cutting away at the treasury all the time he has been in office, wants to be reelected. He's about as fierce an anti-New Dealer as you can find, though he sails under Democratic Party colors. Together with Cleveland's Republican Mayor Burton, he's plunged thousands on relief into starvation. He's the man who called in the troops during the Little Steel strike and wanted to send in troops when Goodyear workers struck for a contract.

Now Governor Davey, who has his election headquarters in Akron, has found himself a new ally. The Rev. Gerald K. Smith walked into town the other day, made a blood-and-thunder speech at the armory, and is out plugging for Davey. Ohio is good fascist territory, with its confused middle-class people being pushed into desperation by the monopolies. When Gerald K. Smith comes round, you can be sure that there will be an attempt to harness unrest to some "shirt" outfit, to anti-Semitism, to the worst kind of reaction. But out here we've also got a Labor's Non-Partisan League that is campaigning for all its might on a "Defeat Davey, Defeat Brickner" (Republican candidate) platform. If anyone has any doubts about the importance of a democratic front in this state, Smith should teach them better. And to our Catholic brothers, the outstretched hand should mean a good deal more when they remember that Gerald K. Smith lumps Jews, Communists, Negroes, and Catholics in his crusade for reaction and persecution.

DAVID CROWLEY.

Akron, O.

Insurance Workers

TO NEW MASSES: The Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. has hired Samuel Seabury to fight the union of its agents. The Industrial Insurance Agents Union, Local 30, UOPWA, CIO, was certified by the State Labor Relations Board on Apr. 23, 1938, as the proper bargaining agent, after an election among the company's New York City employees.

When, after this decision, the company refused to bargain collectively with the union, the board, on June 7, 1938, after another hearing ordered the Metropolitan to negotiate, in the first decision of this kind ever directed against a major insurance company.

The company, through Mr. Seabury, has now petitioned the Supreme Court of New York for a review of all the board's orders. His first contention is that insurance agents (because they are not laborers or mechanics) are not subject to the SLRB within the meaning of the act; the second, that the election ordered by the board should have been a statewide instead of a city election. There is not the slightest chance of either contention being upheld by the courts. If insurance agents are not employees within the meaning of the act, then its benefits must be denied to every other white-collar worker. An opinion in the Bank of Yorktown case by Mr. Justice Noonan of the New York Supreme Court has already held bank employees to be within the meaning of the act. As for the district, the appropriateness of the proper bargaining unit fixed by any labor board has never been challenged by the courts. This is necessarily a matter within their discretion.

The Metropolitan is determined that the union shall not win. The union's charges of unfair labor practices which are now before the board are unusual in that the men have filed hundreds of affidavits testifying to the Metropolitan's defiance of the law. The company union, the firings, the intimidation and abuse are all present as well as the company's apparent intention of holding off collective bargaining in an attempt to crush the union.

The interesting part of all this is that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. is a mutual company, owned completely by its 29,000,000 policy holders, responsible to its policy holders for every cent of money that comes in and goes out. And this company is spending large sums of money on huge legal retainers, on fighting the union—all in the name of its policy holders, millions of whom are trade-union members.

LEON BERNEY.

New York City.

Among Friends

TO NEW MASSES: It isn't on the editorial pages of the capitalist papers that you find the choicest and rawest samples of reaction. It's in the ostensibly factual reports of the financial-section writers. Take, for example, J. H. Carmical's story on Mexico, in that section of the New York *Times* of June 19. Mr. Carmical talks straight, with no weaving around of "principles," no pretense of high-minded perspectives. He warns flatly that the Mexican government's expropriation of foreign-owned oil properties might give other Latin American countries ideas on this subject; details the sums of money invested in those countries; and goes on to sound off alarms about Mexico as a haven for radicals—finally listing as one of the dangerous possibilities the prospect of Spanish loyalists finding refuge under Cárdenas' regime.

One charge which the correspondent brings against the Mexican President is that he has turned over farming land to the peon who "for countless generations . . . has avoided the policy of creating a surplus" and, therefore, is "the best example of just such a policy on the American continent." It seems that the peon formerly had "no requirements" outside of a few immediate needs—and now he is going to upset this perfect balance of production and consumption by raising food to sell in industrial areas. Worst of all, it is the "best" farming land which Cardenas has turned over to "these people." There is one touch of sentimentality in the piece: without foreign capital, where would the poor, poor Latin Americans be, and imagine the short-sightedness of President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull in allowing Cárdenas to deprive them of the milk-and-honey of billion-dollar investments from America. Otherwise, Mr. Carmical doesn't bother to cover up his feelings; he knows he's among friends. His readers should know who those friends are.

(MRS.) JANE DARROW.

Baltimore, Md.

Required Reading

TO NEW MASSES: I have just finished reading Granville Hicks' *I Like America,* and I am convinced that your reviewer was entirely right in calling it a book for the millions. It is all the more shocking that the newspaper and magazine reviewers have either ignored the book or consciously played down its importance. Not only is it lively and informative, but it is the kind of book which would serve to stir many confused and scared people out of their lethargy.

Why can't something be done to see to it that the book receives at least the normal amount of publicity in such papers as the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune?* Can't anything be done to see to it that the book reaches the millions for whom it is intended? I wish that every reader of your magazine could form a committee of one to publicize and circulate *I Like America.*

JESSICA BARRETT.

White Plains, N. Y.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

English Writers and Politics

THIS month I want to try to give you some idea of the attitude of English writers to politics. Note the word "attitude"; few writers in England, even today, have a political allegiance, beyond being more or less vaguely, more or less vehemently anti-fascist; their attitude to politics, generally speaking, is that of one who holds his nose, averts his eyes, and passes by on the other side. Politics is not the gentlemanly thing; it's okay in theory, but in practice it won't do; let's leave it to the specialists and mind our own business of writing.

Now, for a nation which gave to the world such distinguished political pamphleteers as Milton, Swift, and Defoe, this attitude is pretty odd. Yet it is not difficult to explain. In the first place, as Marx pointed out, industrial capitalism has made all values secondary and subservient to cash values, and in doing so has denied to the artist his social function and steadily widened the gulf between him and society as a whole. Secondly, the passionate love of freedom, dominant in our whole literature, received a knock from the French Revolution from which our writers have never fully recovered. Disillusioned by the results of the French Revolution, they turned away from political action toward the Ivory Tower and a state of mind best described as liberal individualism; this turning-away was made still more inevitable by the decline of the land-owning aristocracy which, through the system of patronage, had kept writers in touch with everyday political affairs. To writers now, "freedom" less and less meant political freedom, more and more their own personal freedom to write what they liked, how they liked.

This freedom they have still got. Provided he keeps clear of the libel, sedition, and blasphemy laws, the writer in England can go his own sweet way. He will fight tooth and nail to preserve this liberty of writing what he wants to write; he abhors fascism, because he sees it taking away this freedom from his colleagues abroad; but he also is apt to abhor Communism, in so far as he believes that it regiments writers' minds and keeps their pens on the dotted party line. Being a liberal individualist, the average English writer distrusts any form of organization: he is appallingly difficult to organize on any wider basis than the defense of his own craft rights: he has not yet learned to see the difference between discipline for a constructive purpose and the discipline for a destructive purpose which is fascism. He is often a man of genuine—if vague—progressive ideas; but he believes that his duty begins and ends with the illumination of such ideas through his writing; he is not easily brought to understand that political clarity and political action are demanded from him also today, if his position as illuminator of human values is to be preserved.

The business of a tiller of the land is to till the land. Certainly. But in primitive days there were times when he had to drive the plough with his sword girded on and to take his turn at sentry duty on the edge of the field. No doubt it impeded his work, limited his freedom of action for the task which was peculiarly his own; but he preferred this impeded and limited freedom to the possibility of absolute destruction. The writer today who fails to protect the basic and primary conditions of his work by refusing to join in political activity will find that he has betrayed his heritage as surely as if he had falsified and corrupted the integrity of his own work.

English writers, as I have said, are notoriously difficult to organize on any other than a craft basis. Like the mass of our countrymen, they identify politics with party politics and Parliament; their attitude to politics is thus one of indifference, skepticism, or mild derision; they look upon professional politicians of any party with a feeling of pity or faint disgust, as they would look upon anyone who was doing a necessary but dirty job—a scavenger or a sewer man, for instance. If one of their fellow-writers takes an active part in politics, they instinctively suspect him of the worst. Till three years ago, there were no considerable organizations of writers in this country except for the Society of Authors and the PEN, both of which work on a strictly professional basis and are avowedly non-political.

Charles Martin

Then a British section of the International Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture was formed. Its formation was made possible by the initiative of some of the younger writers, who were already politically awake (though not all of them active members of political parties) and who believed the time had come to set up a writers' organization on as wide as possible a progressive basis but differing from other such organizations in that it should admit the necessity of political action. The membership of our section has never been large (at the moment it is about two hundred); but it has numbered from the beginning most of the front rank of living English writers. On the other hand, with certain honorable exceptions, most of the work has been done by its younger members. Before detailing the successes and failures of our Association, I ought to say a word or two about this younger generation of writers.

It is quite wrong to suppose that they are all Socialists, or even that they have clearer political ideas than their elders. It is true to a certain extent (as Wyndham Lewis, our one pro-fascist writer of eminence—unless Bernard Shaw is to be interpreted an another—keeps on telling us) that the orthodoxy of the young nowadays is a left-wing one. But this movement has not yet attained the coherence or the authority of, say, the Fabian Society. Our younger generation of writers has been compelled into political awareness, not by theory, but by hard facts. The slump of 1930 hit them before they had achieved anything settled in the way of income, reputation, or convictions: the Great War had destroyed a tradition, a morality, a system of values which were threadbare enough in all conscience but might have kept out the wind for a few more years; the disintegration of the middle class (from which these writers mainly sprang), the material and spiritual wastage of their society, the ever deepening shadow of war—all these have affected the younger generation and gone to the shaping of their literary work. But many of them are still prevented from drawing revolutionary conclusions by our curious English habit of compromise (called by foreigners, "hypocrisy"), by our even stranger brand of fatalism (which foreigners call "le phlegm anglais"), by their isolation from the masses, and finally by the English dislike for drawing logical conclusions.

Communism has certainly attracted a considerable number of these young writers since 1930; but the virus of liberal individualism is in their blood, preventing many of them

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from joining the Communist Party and causing strange outbreaks among those others who have joined. We have had plenty of "revolutionary" writing from them, but little which demonstrates a true integration of heart, head, and character. The literary scene, indeed, was fast becoming a cross between a bear-garden and a tower of Babel, until the nearer threat of fascism and war compelled us to stop thinking so much about our artistic consciences and to start thinking about saving our skins.

It was at this point that our section of the Association of Writers was formed. For a year at least it looked as if it was bound to perish of a surfeit of tact: its committee skirmished gingerly round each other, fearful of hurting anyone's feelings, desperately trying to find activities which would be offensive to none of the members. Having nursed ourselves through this critical period, we began to grow up. We took a prominent part in the agitation against the present libel law; we set up a number of sub-committees—one, for instance, to disseminate information about cultural work under the Spanish government, and another to investigate school textbooks with the aid of teachers, writers, and publishers; we held an exhibition and auction of books in aid of Spanish relief funds, which made £200; and, of course, there was the usual routine of signed letters to the press.

In November of last year our work received an indirect impetus from the results of a questionnaire sent out by *Left Review* (the only left literary monthly in England). This questionnaire was sent to every author of standing or promise in the country, and asked two questions: "Are you for, or against, the legal government and the people of republican Spain?" "Are you for, or against, Franco and fascism?" The answers, published by *Left Review* in a pamphlet called *Authors Take Sides* [a similar volume has been published in this country by the League of American Writers], showed an enormous preponderance of opinion against fascism. Encouraged by this, and realizing the need for writers to profess publicly against the things that fascism is doing in Spain, China, Austria, Czechoslovakia, we made our biggest effort to date and organized a meeting in the Queen's Hall, London, on June 8.

It is no exaggeration to say that this was the biggest and most significant meeting of writers ever held in England. The speakers, under the chairmanship of John Brophy, included Sir Hugh Walpole, Compton MacKenzie, Rosamond Lehmann, Rose Macaulay, Philip Guedalla, Desmond MacCarthy, Sarah Gertrude Millin, George Birmingham, and G. T. Garratt. Aragon came from France, Adolf Hofmeister from Czechoslovakia. Messages were read out from the League of American Writers and a group of Czechoslovakian authors. The second largest hall in London was filled very nearly to capacity, to hear writers declare "in defense of freedom and against fascism." Apart from the authors on the platform, the meeting was supported by messages from twenty or thirty of our most distinguished writers—by Rebecca West, for instance, Louis Golding, Liddell Hart, L. A. G. Strong, Stephen Spender, Storm Jameson, Margaret Kennedy, Naomi Mitchison. A resolution was passed, with only two dissentients, that "this meeting declares its abhorrence of the aims and methods of fascism, which destroy the highest achievements of humanity, and pledges itself to defend actively that true democracy which alone ensures the free development of society and the individual."

At first sight, the platform looked like a living tableau of the miracle of the healing of the blind. When the speeches started, however, it soon became apparent that some of the patients had only reached the stage of seeing men like trees walking. The traditional attitude of the English writer was well exemplified by Walpole, who said that he liked to be left alone, that fascism disturbed the writer's peace of mind, and that he would say of both fascism and Communism, "A plague on both your houses." The plague-on-both-your-houses theme looked like being the signature tune of the meeting, until sane and decisive speeches by Rosamond Lehmann, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and Amabel Williams-Ellis, together with a contribution of my own, affirmed the point of view that—however much you may dislike Communism—it is fascism which threatens freedom in England today.

Apart from the effect it must have had upon public opinion, the value of this meeting lay chiefly in its implications. It showed us writers of the left that many of our colleagues had no clearer idea of Communism than any spoon-fed reader of the London *Daily Mail;* it showed us, in microcosm, all the intellectual and emotional obstacles to a popular front which exist among the intelligentsia: but it proved beyond contradiction that there exists amongst writers a passionate hatred of fascism, a passionate love of freedom, which only need clarification to produce a political force of real importance. Our task now, in Lenin's words, is "patiently to explain" to our colleagues that fascism cannot be fought in isolation or with the pen alone, but only by a mass movement of the people to which writers must give both imaginative understanding and practical support.

C. DAY LEWIS.

Misleaders of Labor

LABOR CZARS, *by Harold Seidman. Liveright Publishing Corp. $2.50.*

FIVE years ago Harold Seidman wrote some articles for the *Nation* lambasting certain New York labor figures who stood high in the roster of trade-union racketeers. The articles were heavily studded with sensational facts which, while accurate and revealing by themselves, merely glimpsed the background and the causes from which the labor leeches sprang. Seidman, however, was curious and honest enough to try to discover

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how the "Socks" Lanzas and the "Tootsie" Herberts managed to crawl into the unions and entrench themselves with all the deadly viciousness of a consuming cancer. His excellent book, supplementing William Z. Foster's classic *Misleaders of Labor,* provides the answers.

In the period following the Haymarket bombing the trade-union movement was driven to the defensive. Employers, in their frenzy to safeguard the open shop, camouflaged their hostility by blasting labor as being ruled by terrorists and anarchists. Spies infiltrated and wrecked local after local; militant unionists were blacklisted. And the youthful AF of L was forced to counter the employer offensive by delegating authority to organize workers to full-time business agents who would not be dependent on employers for their livelihood.

A few of these business agents were tough, brawny, illiterate men whose scruples were not above reproach. Armed with what amounted to absolute power in dealing with employers, they saw the labor movement as a lush business through which they could enrich themselves. They peddled their authority to the highest bidders, betraying the throttled rank and file without the least qualm of conscience. Offered graft as insurance against strikes or to overlook an employer's violation of union rules, they took it. Sam Parks, organizer of the housesmiths' union and a classic example of a labor despot, deposited thousands of dollars out of a weekly salary of $48. "Skinny" Madden, as agent for the steamfitters, domineered over the entire building industry in Chicago. There was "Umbrella Mike" Boyle, chief of an electrical workers' local, who would leave his umbrella hanging from a bar at a saloon headquarters into which favor-seeking contractors dropped tidy sums. From strike insurance and initiation fees Boyle amassed $500,000 to which he added an income from his plumbing and real-estate businesses. Bob Brindell, as czar of the New York building trades and crony of William Hutcheson, president of the carpenters' union, drove to his "court" in a Packard or Cadillac and spent the summers on his country estate. With a building-industry employers' association, he founded a monopoly which crushed all competition in the local market through collusive bidding. By pulling men from their jobs, Brindell severely disciplined recalcitrant contractors. Around 1912, gangsters began clubbing their way into the unions until in the twenties many locals were afflicted with the labor-gangster disease. In Chicago Al Capone practically invaded all of the AF of L affiliates, and in New York "Dutch" Schultz rode mightily in the restaurant workers' organizations.

Bribes and beatings of rebellious rank-and-file members were the pure and simple manifestations of union-leader corruption. But Seidman is careful to prove that while labor racketeering was born out of the hostility of employers and nourished by their greed, the AF of L's craft selfishness and political

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floundering were in small part responsible for its flourishing. By rejecting independent political action, federation officials tied themselves to political machines which protected the racketeers. When Jimmy Walker resigned from City Hall under fire, Joe Ryan of the International Longshoremen's Association was among the few who defended him. In the past the Building Trades Council has been known as the "annex of Tammany Hall." Tammany district attorneys rarely prosecuted labor racketeers.

The AF of L top leadership has made a few feeble attempts to clean house. Gompers frequently attacked rank-and-file critics as radicals and enemies of labor. After "Umbrella Mike" Boyle was imprisoned, it was Gompers who interceded with President Wilson to have Boyle's sentence commuted. Nor did "Weeping Willie" Green's accession o Gompers' throne change the federation's attitude toward known racketeers. Several members of the federation's executive council were heads of national unions whose despotic constitutions made it impossible to bring charges against piratical local bosses. Moreover, they themselves refused to take action because it would threaten their sinecures.

In the CIO's structure and methods of organization and what it has achieved thus far, Seidman sees part of the solution to labor racketeering. Autocracy cannot thrive in a labor organization from which craft snobbery has been eliminated and whose leaders are constantly accountable to the membership. But Seidman also sees the need for a minimum of regulatory legislation to protect the rank and file against corrupt officials. I am afraid, however, that any such legislation would provide an open field day for legislation from anti-union interests. That has happened before. The best solution is the one he himself finally suggests: "The cure for labor racketeering is not less unionism, but more unionism, democratic unionism, and militant unionism. When craft selfishness gives way to class solidarity, then and only then will the reign of the labor czars come to an end."

JOHN STUART.

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guarded by some Great Mathematician. The very title of the book indicates their appreciation of the progress made by science. Contemporary physics has deepened our knowledge by discovering more accurate methods of theoretical and experimental analysis, which were ignored by the mechanistic-minded scientists of the nineteenth century. Science has gone up an ascending curve; each new advance from Newton to Einstein increased the truth content of human knowledge. The evolution of physics makes absurd the contention of Eddington and Jeans that the development of science has ended in confusion and uncertainty.

Within the confines of this small volume, Einstein and Infeld trace the progress made in physics from Galileo to the current work in relativity and quantum theory. There are simple but comprehensive accounts of the contributions made by Newton, Maxwell, and the other leaders in the field, including Einstein himself. Their systematic description of physical theory sketches in the main outline of the conceptual framework upon which is built the entire structure of physics. The authors show the dependence of each new discovery upon previous knowledge, the inter-connection between the various fields, and how this leads to the broadening of the theoretical scaffolding, ever more comprehensive. In short, we obtain "a fuller understanding of the laws governing physical phenomena."

Insofar as the authors deal with what might be called the internal problems of physics, they provide a compass which guides the reader through a vast field which has never before been very successfully explored in popular terms. They show the increase in our knowledge, our more accurate understanding of the physical world. There are no invocations to the supernatural for irrational solutions of the current paradoxes of physics.

Where the authors fall down is in their treatment of the philosophical background of science. Their own account of the evolution of physics shows the need for a consistent materialism. Unfortunately they avoid the conclusion projected by their own findings, and take refuge in an outmoded agnosticism which plays into the hands of the confusionists. They conclude that "physical concepts are free creations of the human mind, and are not, however it may seem, uniquely determined by the external world." Thus they repeat the argument of the idealists that science is but another method of constructing mental systems, none of which dovetails with objective truth.

This attitude can only lead to the swamp of idealism where lurk the hobgoblins of the supernatural. For if you make physical phenomena merely another set of mental constructions, then all scientific problems in the final analysis become insoluble and must of necessity be referred back to some extra-scientific source.

It is surprising that Einstein should have fallen into this pit. His previous work displayed a healthy instinct for materialism, and his philosophical position was close to that of Planck, who insists that a "belief in some sort of reality outside us alone provides the necessary support in our aimless groping." Physics, more than any other discipline, has shown that the fundamental postulate of scientific investigation is the existence of a real world, independent of our thought and perception. This is the core of science and is verified every day in the laboratories of working scientists.

The clue to the bogging down of the authors into an unscientific philosophy seems to lie in their purely formal treatment of the subject. Had they investigated the relationship between the theories of science and the material milieu in which they are developed, they would not have rejected the naive mechanism of classical physics only to adopt an even more fruitless agnosticism. They would have seen, as many other scientists have come to realize, that the only fruitful alternative is dialectical materialism. Along this path lies the solution for the paradoxes uncovered by the crisis in science; with this philosophical foundation there can be constructed a theoretical scaffolding which will support the revolutionary discoveries of the past four decades.

DAVID RAMSEY.

Two Uses of the Image

SELECTED POEMS, *by John Gould Fletcher. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.*

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND OTHER POEMS, *by Sydney Salt. Bruce Humphries, Inc. $2.*

WITH the possible exception of William Carlos Williams, there is today no major English or American poet who employs the Imagist technique in all its restrictive austerity. Amy Lowell and T. E. Hulme are dead; Ezra Pound regurgitates cantos at Rapallo while H. D., Richard Aldington, and F. S. Flint remain—poetically at least—in comparative silence. The meteoric decline of Imagism is no less remarkable than the furious battles attending its equally rapid birth; and the publication of these two volumes invites us to consider in retrospect the reasons for such an astonishingly short life span. Briefly, the most cogent argument seems to be that Imagism was purely an esthetic revolt directed against the conventional rhetoric of the Victorians, when poetry actually needed a cultural revolt directed against the values of the bourgeoisie. After the war, when T. S. Eliot (to paraphrase Stephen Spender) decided to immerse himself in the destructive element, the cultural revolution was in full swing; and poets like Eliot, Crane, Pound (in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*), Stevens, and MacLeish took what the Imagists had learned about technique and passed on.

It is pertinent to observe, in this connection, that the defects which vitiate the larger

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portion of Mr. Fletcher's work can be almost directly attributed to his early schooling in Imagist esthetics. The plastic and musical experiments of his poetic "Symphonies" were vitalizing insofar as they extended the resources of the medium; but they led to a complete neglect of what we might call the *literary* content of the poem—as distinguished from its coloristic or musical content. In practice, this meant that the series of isolated images composing the poem did not refer as a group to any context outside the immediate sensation-links which controlled their composition. Cleanth Brooks, Jr., in the *Southern Review,* has pointed out that the *images* of the Imagist poets were rarely the *symbols* for a complex reality; and when Mr. Fletcher attempts to apprehend such a reality in poetic terms, he finds himself unable to control the accumulation of visual imagery, which piles up by the natural process of associative multiplication. The diffuseness of Mr. Fletcher's recent "Elegies" is due primarily to this lack of a compositional center, which would fuse both the static image of sensation and the flat ideological abstraction. It is only necessary to compare Mr. Fletcher's "Elegies" with any of Eliot's early poems in the Imagist manner—say "Preludes"—in order to discover that Eliot achieves his powerful imaginative fusion precisely because his images are converted into symbols by focusing upon a homogeneous social context.

Such a conversion of image into symbol is manifest in Sydney Salt's long poem, "Christopher Columbus"—though Mr. Salt's conception necessarily demands a more intricate fusion. The individual images of Mr. Salt's poem are transformed into symbols on two levels: first, by being embedded in a framework of historic narrative—the voyage of Columbus to discover a new world; and then, since the scaffolding of historic fact is *itself* used as a symbol of man searching for a new spiritual universe, attention is shifted to the *values* which are defined by the aggregate of symbols. In this way, Mr. Salt is enabled to transcend the limitations of space-time location, and to fuse historic fact with poetic myth. As a corollary, this structural synthesis is carried forward into the very *substance* of the poem, where Columbus announces the practical identification of the spiritual with the material, the ideal with the reality, the poet with the explorer:

A dream in an investment on this earth
and I was a fiery dweller of willingness!
It is the way of a quick journey, to dream,
perhaps to remind us of corporeality?

The quest upon which Columbus embarks symbolizes nothing less than the eternally recurring efforts of humanity to actualize its dream ("A dream in a memory of the whole man"); and though geographically Columbus discovered his new world, the very terms of his success were automatically perverted into spiritual failure.

We forgot the scripture of our desires,
we were men with swords—
not the golden-tongued swords of angels,
but the forked swords of crucifying men!
We had spanned the sea with a look of gold!

So in the last part of the poem, Columbus writes of his inner humiliation and defeat to Gaspar Gorricio, a monk and a man of God, who can intuitively perceive the exalted universe in which his discourse has its being. But at the very moment of death Columbus reaffirms his belief in the creative will, which —with each new generation—presses on toward the eventual attainment of man's wholeness as embodied in his "ancestral dreams."

In an age when the long poem is either fragmentary or formless, Mr. Salt has managed to weld his material into a distinctive organic unity. But even more important is the fact that the values which the poem espouses—and which ultimately determine the coherence of the form—are those of Marxian humanism taken in its widest historical context. The generic nature of these values has been indicated by Kenneth Burke in *Permanence and Change,* where he notes "the highly humanistic or poetic nature" of Communism's criteria. And he goes on to remark that the word itself suggests a latent affinity with the attitude that flowers in "man's capacities for the cooperative. . . ." Thus Mr. Salt appears as a poet who has successfully assimilated the destructive element, and who emerges from it to work towards a new cultural synthesis based on the human values posited in his poem.

JOSEPH FRANK.

Easter Rebellion

DEATH IS SO FAIR, *by Louis Lynch D'Alton. Doubleday, Doran & Co. $2.*

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and for the one unworthy priest the Church loses today, I see a thousand going out to lead the nations back to the one true Church." This vision steels him even against the tears of his old mother, who has lived only to see him a priest whose prayers might loose from hell his father who died unshriven because he would not renounce Fenianism, the Irish patriot creed.

True as ever painter limned or camera caught unawares are Louis Lynch D'Alton's pictures of Irish men and women, and Irish life. Perceptive and sure are his readings of Irish character. He is very much an Irishman, no denying it. All the stranger and sadder, therefore, that his book, with its very powerful scenes of violence and terror—which rank it among the most veracious accounts of guerilla warfare ever written—sums up to a libel on the popular cause and a dirge in the key of defeatism. That war is horrible he proves; but he proves it entirely in terms of brutality, stupidity, and scoundrelism among the people's army, and the effects of these things on the saintly Manus Considine; and the message he reads from his stacked cards is that his native land had better remain Holy Ireland, on its knees, obedient to its priests, supine before its alien rulers and tory exploiters, rather than strike for freedom at the risk of its soul.

That isn't the way American freedom was won, nor the way Spaniards and Chinese look at the matter today. Even the patrician Yeats has sung of the men who fight and die for the people:

> They shall be remembered forever,
> The people shall hear them forever.

But to Mr. D'Alton the Easter Rebellion of 1916 was an act of criminal madness by a little band of egotistic poets. That was not how it appeared to a Russian named Lenin, watching from the Continent. To him this bold stroke for liberty, led in part by the Socialist James Connolly, taught the lesson that intense nationalism is a thing to be respected as a great potential source of revolutionary strength; a perception which led to the building of the Soviet Union on a basis of respect for the traditions and culture of each of the races included in it.

No one would ask Mr. D'Alton to picture all Irish patriots as "knights without fear and without reproach." But when his gallery of revolutionary portraits consists entirely of one hysteric, one sadist, one embezzler, one spy, one informer, and one whore against a background of "bovine" peasants, the most charitable conclusion is that the vivid talents of this writer are unhappily chained to what the Irish call "the slave mind." For as I know and many of us know from personal acquaintance, the typical Irish revolutionist, like the typical Spanish militiaman or Chinese guerilla, is a simple, average, intelligent, decent young man who values liberty enough to fight for it. That breed never bowed to Britain in seven hundred years and never will, either to please the devious Mr. De Valera or to comfort the pious Mr. D'Alton.

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MOVIES

STAUNCH proletarian element that we are —we scarcely ever share the sinful delights of the boogawahzies, particularly the heady pleasure of whirling about in a taxicab. But the rain falls on all of us alike, so we were, one night last week, forced into a cab. The proprietor was reading Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*. He was scowling. We expressed interest in his literary bent. "I'm just checking up on that movie called *Kidnapped*," he said. "Those (unprintable term) changed it all around from the book. There ain't no girl in the book and this David Balfour was a lot older than Freddie Bartholomew." He described the many other deviations taken by Darryl Zanuck. My friend's charges were completely documented. He was an angry consumer.

"I've been checking on these guys ever since I read *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* and then went to see the movie. Jeez, what a gyp that was!" We agreed. "Why, if I had any dough, I'd sue this Zanuck for fraud!" he said. "They have no right to put over stuff like that on the public." We reached our destination before we could exchange notes on *The Adventures of Marco Polo* which is the biggest fraudulent conversion of all.

Most moviegoers have this resentment toward Hollywood's adventures among the masterpieces. It is one phase of the public's growing dissatisfaction with cinema shoddy. Public taste is maturing faster than the producer's adaptability. Up to now audience taste has not been a part of the production equation. While pictures have always been made with an eye on the boxoffice, questions of quality, of artistic ethics, if you will, or any regard for the intelligence of the audience have largely been missing. It has been a proud boast among the overlords of moving pictures that they were producing for a ten-year-old intelligence level, very much like a lurid tabloid editorial policy. This maxim is being exploded. Of my own list of last year's ten best American pictures, a group of nine- to twelve-year-old school girls polled by the National Board of Review, agreed with me on seven of them. Hollywood has seriously misjudged its own ten-year-old intelligence formula.

Manhattan taste may be better than that of the country at large because the concentration of stage drama here tends to provoke comparison with the movies, because New York is the only city with developed film criticism, and, because of the many foreign film houses where the domestic product is so often excelled. Movies have to stand on their own in the big city's cultural pattern.

The movie palace is practically the only cultural center in small-town America. If Hollywood is still master of the small town it is because there is nothing to challenge its standards.

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But the seven films the girls and I approved are also shown in the small towns, villages, and crossroads. Every adult picture made in Hollywood makes it more difficult to sell poor ones. Films like *Zola, Pasteur, Fury, They Won't Forget, Dead End, The Good Earth,* coming from the industry itself, are the seeds of decay of Hollywood's nursery standards.

Our taxi driver and the rest of us must hit Hollywood where it hurts—in the box-office—by supporting the best and avoiding the usual. That is criticism producers understand.

The first thing you may note about Edward G. Robinson's newest picture, *The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse,* is its complete staginess. The play by Barre Lyndon was brought to celluloid by John Wexley and John Huston, and it loses little of its proscenium limitations in the transfer. Movies are not an extension of the stage. Film is dialogue (or complete absence of it) plus music, plus photography, plus dance (or pantomime), plus astonishing psychoanalytical ability (closeups, flashbacks, montage), and above all, film is action. The stage beside it is a rostrum for orations or for the composition of living pictures.

This is not to lay the impeachment upon the Messrs. Wexley and Huston. When their camera gets out of the stage drawing-room to follow Dr. Clitterhouse and the fur thieves, or when the lens becomes the eyes of the gangster dying of poison as he looks at Dr. Clitterhouse as through a reversed telescope, the conception is filmic. Even in the dialogue aspect they have extended the play beyond its original curtain for a brilliant and comic courtroom scene. But it is a futile task, this adapting plays for pictures. I mean this, of course, as an esthetic objection, for the film is a fine entertainment. The point is that *Dr. Clitterhouse* is still a play with its photograph taken, however intriguing it may be in sum.

Film is something much more than that, and its subjects must be conceived in terms of camera. Alfred Hitchcock is one of the rare film-makers who thinks cinematically. One is intrigued with the idea of Edward Kern of Garrison Films when he says he would like to have seen the Englishman do *Blockade.*

The introductory images of *Dr. Clitterhouse* are good film. First a shot of a woman's hands at the piano (sound of a soprano singing), then the camera traveling to her plain face, over to the singer, revealing, as the range expands, people in evening clothes, a drawing room. Without cutting in with another shot, the camera, as though it were an unblinking eye, backs out through a window, up the side of a vine-covered mansion to a window where a maid draws the shade, around the angle of the house, through another window, and we see Dr. Clitterhouse's flashlight turned upon a jewel box. Cut to closeup of the jewels. As a descriptive technique this ramble of the camera is complete.

Then we arrive at the opening curtain of the play and the cinema method gives way to

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The SUB SELLER

Christina Stead, author of the newly published *House of All Nations,* likes New Masses writers, I see by May Cameron's interview in the *N. Y. Post.* I worked in a bank once and didn't think I cared to know any more about banking, but I might take a chance on a book by such a discriminating woman.

A famous playwright, Sam Sillen tells me, buys all his books on the basis of New Masses book reviews.

Jules Garfield, who has just been selected by Warner Bros. to play a leading role in "Dust Be My Destiny," reads New Masses every week, and says it's *"the most enjoyable weekly for guidance in defense of democracy and progress."*

Mayor Hague says New Masses is supported by the Garland Fund. Wish he were right, but he must have heard about Tiba Garlin, who's done such a swell job raising funds at New Masses "affairs" this year.

George Sokolsky is agonized because Communists are so sure of themselves. Now what bright little WYFIP will sell Mr. Sokolsky a sub to New Masses, so he can have the fun of being sure of himself, too?

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Occupation ss9

the play of the inquisitive doctor who took up a life of crime to get first-hand experience for his book on criminology. Robinson's role, a new personality for the greatest screen gangster, is accomplished and solid. Allen Jenkins, Claire Trevor, Humphrey Bogart, Maxie Rosenbloom, and Vladimir Sokoloff are Dr. Clitterhouse's guinea pigs in the crime laboratory.

It is not a straight comedy. It has a great deal of drama with sophisticated fillips of plot. The final episode in the courtroom with Dr. Clitterhouse's lawyer pleading insanity and the doctor stoutly maintaining that he is sane, in order to protect his professional integrity, is one of the season's high points in comedy. The verdict of the harassed jury is a clever comic invention which I will leave unrevealed for your curiosity's sake.

Garrison Films has assembled a silent two-reeler on 16-mm. film, entitled *Stop Japan,* for rental or outright sale to labor and progressive organizations. It is a modest, workmanlike job, and, as so often happens, it turns out to be a darn good film for anybody's money. Not only is the movie an eloquent protest but it introduces several interesting cinema innovations. One is the device used for Muriel Rukeyser's titles, which are superimposed at the bottom of the pictures as are English titles for foreign films. This allows a full text without breaking up the continuity with full-screen captions. Another imaginative sequence gives us a notable Gropper cartoon which was first used on the cover of *China Today*—a samurai warrior stretched menacingly across China. Between the grasping arms of the Japanese killer we see a tiny square of action shots of the invasion. Even on the small screen of amateur projectors, the film is impressive. Its very pointed and well-developed argument for boycotting Japanese goods makes *Stop Japan* invaluable for use by progressive organizations.

The big race down the Mississippi to catch the flavor of the ante-bellum South before the wages-and-hours bill blows it away with the wind, finds MGM bringing their sidewheeler into New Ahlins two months behind *Jezebel,* Warner Brothers' entry. *Toy Wife,* fitted for the ceremonious fluttery of Luise Rainer, is a dead ringer for *Jezebel,* about which some inspired scribe, I think it was myself, said, "a watched plot never boils."

As usual, there is enough yardage of old Southern honor, to supply at least three fascist powers with diplomatic procedure for a year. Everybody just itches to get out to the dueling grounds and get it over with in time for the big deathbed scene.

The picture is worth going into the third paragraph for because of the loving production it has been given. It has photography and costuming of unusual quality. You can't find a thing wrong with *how* it was done. *Why* it was done puzzles me. I can't get enthusiastic about Luise Rainer or anyone else in these pressed-between-the-leaves remembrances of the idiotic way of life in old Dixie. I say it's magnolia, and the hell with it.

JAMES DUGAN.

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